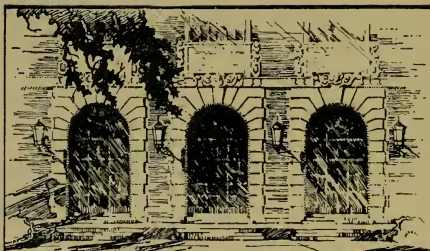




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For Beardmore
THE *9th Lane Regt*
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PORT ADMIRAL;

A TALE OF THE WAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"CAVENDISH."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
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1833.

“ WOMAN 'TIS THINE TO CLEANSE HIS HEART
FROM EVERY DARK UNHOLY PART;
THINE IN DOMESTIC SOLITUDE,
TO WIN HIM TO BE WISE AND GOOD;
HIS PATTERN, GUIDE, AND FRIEND TO BE,
AND GIVE HIM BACK THE HEAVEN HE FORFEITED FOR THEE.”

UNKNOWN.

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THE PORT ADMIRAL,

A TALE OF THE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

“ At this hour

Lie at my mercy all my enemies,
Shortly shall all my labours end, and thou
Shalt have the air at freedom ; for a little
Follow and do me service.”

SHAKSPEARE.

GREAT as was the surprise which the Port Admiral experienced, at witnessing the return of his daughters in such a vessel, the reader will readily conceive that it in no way lessened his extreme joy at once more receiving them in safety. Folding first one in his arms, and then another, as he kissed them on the forehead with the most lively affection, he exclaimed, “ Why Chatty, you little gipsey ! you’ve lost a precious sight of tonnage and beam ! Odds bobs ! how have they been serving you ? Short commons in the purser’s store-room, I guess ! Why I’ve expected you for the last two or three days—and Margiée, dear

girl, you've been pulled down a peg. Come tell me all about it—how did you come to leave an old fellow where the little boat was—all behind ——? Dickens! you said nothing in your letter, Captain Croiser, save that they'd been blown out. Here was I in a pretty hubbub—sent a couple of tenders off on the next morning to look after ye, but they fell in with such a confounded calm, they could not get on a peg. Come, come, don't talk now—we'll have all this yarn to-morrow. Here comes the tray—do you hasten up stairs, you little rogues, and get rid of these wet things, and stow yourselves away to get a little sleep—whatever you want shall be sent up to you. God bless your little souls—'all's well that ends well,' they say. Please Heaven you mayn't be the worse for such a voyage!"

Sir Richard having seen to the accommodation of all the party, not omitting "that honest old rascal, Nine-fathom 'Tim," as he called him, as well as his faithful coxswain, Garnet, they all arose on the ensuing morning very little the worse for their perilous voyage, while the worst effects that manifested themselves were a few colds.

Many were the wonderful stories related during

the time of breakfast by Bombast, Puff, and Lady Sapphira. Unfortunately there was no one to hear them except Sir Richard, and he knew the narrators too well to care anything about their romances. These redoubtable good people then were forced to the sad extremity of bandying their relations among each other, which they did in the most satisfactory manner—namely, by all speaking at once.

When the full and true account of their sufferings had come to an end, the Port Admiral informed Chatty, that calculating on their arriving at a much earlier date, and not being aware of what they had gone through, he had sent out invitations for a grand ball to celebrate at once their return, and the anniversary of his noted action with the ———— squadron, which was in fact on the ensuing day. However as they were manifestly unequal to the exertion, he would at once send and put the party off, though sorry to do so, since the * happened to be lying in Hamoaze with his fine frigate, and had accepted the invitation to be present at the ball, for which preparations on a very extensive scale had been begun, so as to render it also *a fête cham-*

pêtre. No sooner did Charlotte hear this congenial piece of news, than she insisted on its not being put off; and her wild spirits rising with the idea of flirting through a whole evening with the gallant young *, made her feel herself at once equal to the exertion. She was, as she expressed herself, “delighted.”

Margarita, whose disposition led her rather to retire from gaiety than to seek it, was somewhat opposed to such an exertion; but seeing how much her sister was bent on it, she gave way. The Port Admiral was also favourable to its taking place, provided it was not likely to prove injurious to his children, since in his own mind he contemplated a very brilliant celebration of a day, when he took his first step on that long path of fame through which he had subsequently passed. It was therefore agreed *nem con*, that the festival should take place on the ensuing night, as had been previously intended.

Not an instant longer could Charlotte sit at table; her breakfast was scarcely finished, when she set off with her usual excess of joy, to see that several little arrangements connected with her toilette and other matters were in a state of

readiness. Sir Richard now took an early opportunity of drawing Croiser and Rannolini aside, and after expressing to them in the warmest terms his gratitude for their kindness to his children, repeated to Croiser his assurance that his house was as welcome as Croiser's home, and extended the same hospitable invitation to Rannolini. He added in conclusion, "It is true that at present there is no appearance of such a pleasure being in reserve for me; but if by any turn of Fortune it should ever be in Richard Salisbury's power to repay the debt he owes to you, rely on the word of a sailor that it shall be done, with interest and pleasure; though to be sure I never thought to have owed so much to a native of that land which I never should have rightly esteemed, but for the happiness of knowing M. Rannolini."

There was something in the frank hearty character of Sir Richard, and his familiar yet occasionally noble and dignified bearing, that at once captivated Rannolini. "He is a thorough admiral, every inch of him!" said the Frenchman. "Would there were but twenty such in France! We'd soon shew the world another story! But stay! The pear is not yet ripe—he does not

speaking bad French either, considering how long he has left *Ma belle France!*" and the foreigner fixed his piercing gaze on the far line of the horizon, beyond which lay his beloved 'land of the Gaul,' as it was seen from the window where they were standing, while one of those suppressed sighs stole forth from his lips, which seemed to bear with it some portion of the energetic soul which it left struggling within.

"Come, Croiser, let us walk. I must survey these grounds, and see if my observations coincide with the plans and maps submitted to me at Paris by * * *." Saying this, he thrust his arm through that of Croiser, and they walked rapidly into the park.

When they imagined themselves out of earshot, Rannolini said, "Lead me to that part called Maker Heights, where they say there stands a church. The tower—so * * * writes to me—was used as a fortress in the parliamentary wars. It ought to have a commanding site. It would be useful in case of such an extremity to hold a couple of mortar-beds. From such a height, it would be a matter of ease to bombard and set fire to yonder dock-yard. How delightful is this breeze.

The gale of yesterday in a green old age. Here we have a fine view of the bay. See how few traces of the storm are left upon the sea—one could scarcely think how tremendously it had been agitated.

“Yes, very true; but mark you those dark specks upon the surrounding line of coast—these are the effects. See, two—four—six—eight—twelve—wrecks, and on an average, perhaps, not less than six lives lost in each.”

“True! that is sad! I have seen many a good skirmish decided without losing so many brave fellows. Fortune, thou hast favoured me hitherto!—I have to thank thee; nor less to thank yourself, my Croiser. You have stood me in good stead. The day may come when I shall be able to repay thee. Dost thou not wish for its advent—when perhaps thou wilt be lying in that very bay, commanding the united naval strength of Britain and of France! When England shall have changed masters, and you and I are about to change the destiny of the world. When not a timber shall float upon yonder element but must submit to you. When the whole line of the enemy’s coast is blockaded—port by port, from the Gulf of

Finland to Madras; while the legions of Imperial France plant her eagles on the necks of the autocrats of the North! When the commerce of the world, and the empire of the globe are ours! Think of that day!—what a glorious retrospection it *will* be! What a glorious perspective it *is*!!” And the daring mortal who thus spoke, extended his arm, as if to point out the gigantic shades of that vision, the realization of which he considered to be in the distance of futurity. The fiery tide that appeared to be pulsating through his veins and lighting up his eye, scarcely seemed to be flowing through a mere mortal form. At first this reminiscence of the vast plans, in the execution of which they were both engaged, seemed to excite a corresponding glow in the breast of Croiser. In a few minutes the manifestation of this emotion faded from his countenance, and a melancholy expression succeeded, as if some sense of self-abasement was connected with such schemes, as well as sorrow for the country with whose happiness he was thus leagued to tamper.

Rannolini perceived this, and his brow fell as he sternly folded his arms on his bosom. Suddenly turning, as his face once more lighted up,

he exclaimed, "Think of the full, the deep revenge which thou wilt take for all the indignities thou hast suffered."

"Hah! thou art right," returned Croiser, catching as quickly at the idea, while the blood rushed to his features, "I do—I will think of that, and spare them"—

"Never!"—

"Ay, never!—and now," drawing Rannolini's arm through his, "let us to our survey." As they moved away from the spot which they had occupied they heard a rustling in the wood just below.

"What is that?" demanded Rannolini, anxiously. "Hark!"

"Merely a deer's antler among the underwood. Yonder lies the tower of Maker church, let us proceed."

"But now, Croiser, we must arrange our journey to London. By the day after to-morrow I shall have been exactly one week from France. Three weeks is all I can allow myself—for that space I know that my absence will not be discovered. D——c is the only one supposed to be in my confidence. He believes that I am now making a tour along the cotes du Nord incognito.

So also believe our good gossips at Paris.—Fancy, Croiser, if they only knew—Well, well, touching this said ball, I have no time to throw away in fooleries, but I shall stay for three reasons:—First, if I were to start to-day, the difference of time would be lost by there being no relays ordered on the road. Second, I must see what is to be done with this Sir Richard—his name would be very useful, and as he is your ——”

“ I advise you beforehand, you might as well attempt to move that mewstone and get it under weigh. He is every thing that is honourable, kind, and excellent, but taking his smuggling with heart and soul, out of the question, there is not a more staunch loyalist and Englishman in the island.—Besides, he is connected by blood with the first families in the kingdom, and is moreover most unhappily tainted with all those deep, but narrow prejudices which inspire a hatred of every thing French. Indeed, I should be surprised at his kindness towards you were I not fully aware that no one approaches the person of M. Rannolini without feeling the fascination which he so eminently possesses.”

“ Come, come, Croiser, that is not so bad !” re-

torted the foreigner, smiling, as he took Croiser by the ear. "Thou would'st shine resplendently at the Tuilleries, were it not that thou art to hold a court of thine own at St. James'. And so you think than even *my* fascination will not be able to overcome this gallant old sailor's John Bullism. Well, well, we shall see—it is worth a two days' trial; you must second me;—and now reason the third, I must secure this opportunity of visiting your dock-yard, and that citadel in the creek there, as well as the remainder of the lines; so you must procure me a good horse.—And, Croiser, write off without delay to get relays on the road twixt this and London. And what art thou going to do for thy pretty Pearl of the ocean? How is she to be replaced? Remember thou must re-land me in France within a fortnight. Herbage must not spring up beneath our feet."

"True! With regard to a vessel, I know of one that will just suit us—she is very much in the style of my poor Pearl. She was built for smuggling, and was nearly finished when I left this port last. With a little alteration in her accommodations, she will serve our purpose, as she promises to be a beautiful sailer. I will draw a

bill on ——, and purchase her at once. Tarpaulin shall be left behind to expedite her rigging and fitting out, and bring her round to meet us at Dover, when ye shall be landed near Calais or Boulogne; it will save much time."

"Hah, that is good!—In that way we shall be able to accomplish it with ease. Now then,—to-day is Thursday,—the ball occupies to-morrow, Friday,—and on Saturday we depart—travel night and day,—Sunday,—Monday,—by night, we arrive in London on Tuesday. I see *! Till that moment then, my steps are planned!—Have I any thing further to care about? No,—Do you see to the relays and the vessel!"

"Never fear me I shall not fail: and here we are at Maker tower."

The keys having been procured, and Rannolini having ascended and satisfied himself as to its commanding position, he remained taking a view of the surrounding country with one of the admiral's glasses, which Croiser had brought.

Before them to the south lay the channel, its waves moved freshly by the subsiding gale, and sparkling in the bright rays of the sun, which glancing occasionally on some chance sail, thus

gave additional life to the scene. To the west the eye wandered over a charming variety of hill and dale, wood and pasture; to the east, beneath them, were seen the grounds of Mount Edgecumbe, the enclosing wall of which formed one boundary of the church-yard. To the north lay the valley through which the Tamar, debouching into Hamoaze, and thence into the sea, formed the harbour, one vivid scene of life and industry. Beyond this again, were seen the sheds of the dock-yards so kindly mentioned by Rannolini. The tower had been newly leaded, and was partly covered over with a sort of hatch for the men who were occasionally stationed there to look out, while the ring-bolts which were in use for the flag-staff could, as Rannolini remarked, have been very easily made serviceable for working a couple of guns or mortars.

“This, you observe,” said Croiser, “is one of the watch towers, from whence we Englishers keep a look out upon the sea to know when that monster Buonaparty is coming.”

“No!—is it indeed?”

“Indeed it is.”

“Bah, how droll, how comical; if they only knew—”

“Ah, if they only knew, the whole country would be up in arms; they would expect to see ‘the Army of England’ leap from your coat-pocket at least. If they knew indeed!—our lives would be worth but small purchase-money.”

“True! But this is idle babbling. What a superb view! A fine old domain that—You say Sir Richard does not own it, but is merely a tenant to his friend or kinsman, the Earl of ——.”

“Exactly.”

“This breeze is delightful! My soul seems to rise with every breath which I inhale. I am just in the cue at this moment to fight another Marengo; though, to be sure, you can boast no such a plain in this part of the world! How grandly those black pines are tossing their ragged heads in the wind as they bend over the sea.—Hark, at the deep base rolling on the ear. I should like such a residence as this. There is a wildness in it, that at once rouses and yet lulls me. On such a day as this I can readily conceive the scenery that inspired your Ossian, or Macpherson,

or whoever he may be. Below, yonder, are all the elements of the dark, the wild, and the grand. What then must it be in the fastnesses of the North? When all our present plans are accomplished, and I have nothing better to amuse me, I intend taking a tour into your Scotland if it only be for a renewal of old associations. But come, I have no time for these fooleries—I have seen enough here—I am satisfied—there lies the dock-yard.—Let us be moving.—I must see that.—The Port Admiral, I suppose, will give us a passport.—The harbour seems very full of shipping.—Hah! What fine frigate is that?”

“The ——, her captain is the *, whom you heard mentioned by Sir Richard.”

“Ah!—Then we will board her in her passage to the dock-yard. Come, Croiser, let us go, be quick, I have no time to lose.—To horse and away, young friend. How many miles’ extent of lines have you here?”

“Oh, very few—not more than seven at the utmost.”

“Bah! a mere two hours’ ride—I think nothing of some twenty or thirty miles. D——c and myself, in our tours of inspection, are often twelve

hours in the saddle—those who take the lead find it no sinecure. Come, thou hast shewn me what it is to manage a ship in a gale of wind—now I'll shew thee how to manage a charger, and do thou secure before hand a pencil and a slip of paper,—I may want to make a memorandum.”

“ Be very cautious that you are not seen.”

“ Thanks to thee, Croiser, but I am always cautious in an enemy's country ; and now let us descend.” As Rannolini said this, he indulged Croiser with the usual pinch of the ear, and hurrying down, they soon reached the house, and obtained an order from Sir Richard to visit the dock-yard, and set off with Nine-fathom Tim, steering as coxswain.

Courage and talent were ever sure passports to Rannolini's favour, and Tarpaulin stood very high in his esteem. After eyeing the immense proportions of the latter for some minutes, Rannolini remarked to Croiser, “ What a famous grenadier that Triton of yours would make ! I wish he had been a soldier, I should like to have such a man as that for colour-sergeant of the guards. Ask him how he would like a soldier's life.”

“Hah, ha! I need hardly ask him, I think, for his answer. Tarpaulin, I think you’d make a good grenadier. How would you like to turn soldier?”

“Soger, your honour?” replied the tar, knitting his brows, “umph! the red varmint! the first beggarly corporal that ever went to drill me into a red herring, dash my wig if I wouldn’t swallow him, musket, ramrod, cartridge-box and all, like the shark at Port Royal, which that long tongued skipper tells about. They, your honour, happened to catch the poor creetur just after a full dinner, and ripping it open, found Jemy Toggle the corporal of marines all ataunto, with his bayonet shipped and the hour glass in his hand; for he tumbled overboard ye see, as he went to strike the bell. Forward there, stand by with your bow oar!”

On translating this to Rannolini, he shrugged his shoulder, saying, “Well, after all, it would be a pity to spoil so good a sailor. Such a fellow in boarding, would carry a frigate by himself. It’s a pity he cannot speak French! But what means that procession of boats going off to the frigate? See Croiser,” added Rannolini, pointing to a string of boats which seemed to contain a quantity of fe-

males and followed in the wake of a man of war's gig containing two officers. Croiser looked in the direction pointed out. "That officer in the boat is the captain, the *, going on board with the midshipman of his gig; but for what purpose all those women are following him, it is impossible to say. I'll ask Tarpaulin. What means that string of boats, Tim, in the wake of the *, they seem crammed with women?"

"Hah! your Honour!" answered Tim, grimly smiling. "That * B-lly is a gallows young chap for them 'ere craft; and the cunning creeturs they seems to have a sort of natural true instinct as to who's got a sneaking regard for their sect, your honour! and so they sticks to the * like a leech. He can't so much as go ashore at North Corner but there it's —tich their bonnets and 'God bless your Honour,' and 'your R-y-l H-ghn-ss, — a handsome face is on your Honour's shoulders,' and all the like o' that. True enough belike for anything I know to the contrary—but it's all a sprat to catch a mackerel—'cause your honour must know that the *'s first leaftenant is a reg'lar rough and ready kind chap, a rum sort o' fish I guess, sin' he holds out to be a womanhater, or as some

call it a regular 'Simon.^a' So directly the * goes on shore, what does he do, but muster all the bonnet-craft on the quarter-deck and bundles them over the side. Now they poor creeturs, doesn't like that sort o' usage, so what do they do, but make sail straight away for the *'s hotel, and set up a fine pillalu, and he who's a sort of fellow-faling in the case, and a good-natured heart within him into the bargain, gives them a laugh and tells them to hold their piping, and as he's a going off presently they shall all come after him. Then ye see, your honour, there's a pretty hulla-baloo again, and they finds they can't do less in gratitude than ask him for something to drink his ——'s health, and good luck in prize money, and having got that, down they go to Mutton Cove or North Corner, or wherever it may be his honour's boats' lying, wait till he comes down, and go off in his wake, just as you may see now. Then the first leaftenant, Mr. Sch-mb—g may let 'em stay on board a day or two till he thinks his skipper is busy after some other game ashore, and then bundles them over the side again, and they go to their young master agen, and he tows 'em

^a In all probability our good friend Tim meant to say 'Timon.'

off again and so on till the ship sails, your honour. At last, whip me if they arn't become as proud of it as a dog with two tails, and if ye hap to ask them who they are—they cock up their bonnets an' tell a fellow they belong to the *'s staff—thof to be sure I don't see what a staff has to do with the women, seeing none but a ruffian would lift his hand agen the sect. That's my way of thinking, your honour, and I know," muttering in a lower voice, " that's saved Missis Sal Moffat many a good starting, when the varmint used to run after the sogers ; but I mustn't rip ould scores : poor Sal's gone ! and she was a smart hand after all at herring-boning a rent in a fellow's togs, or clapping a patch on a blue jacket, or this wouldn't have lasted so long—so I'll drink to her very good health this cold morning, while their honour's go up the side !"

Here the men laid in their oars as the boat under Tim's guidance swept up to the gangway, and Croiser and his friend having ascended, Tarpaulin drew forth his metal mistress to comfort his widowed soul, notwithstanding that his " cold morning" related to one in the height of a western summer.

“ I think highly of the * for that trait,” remarked Rannolini, to whom Croiser had translated Tim’s anecdote. “ It is wise in a commander to engage the affections of his men in trivial and unimportant matters. These things are not forgotten when he has to oppose them on great occasions. This is the more evident as twenty of these little opportunities occur every week; a trying emergency on the other hand not once a month. This is a great spring in the mechanism of command. Wise men make the greatest use of it; blockheads despise it. I have seen—I know how some men seek to rule—they keep up a fretting discipline in fifty little matters which tease their inferiors, and when the crisis comes, what more natural than that the men should regard their own lives and comfort before the fame of a superior of whom they are tired?”

CHAPTER II.

“ We frolic while 'tis May.”

GRAY.

THEY now gained the quarter-deck, when Ran-nolini, taking Croiser's arm, said, “ Come, let us look about us. What are they doing with those women? Surely that is no very delicate mode of proceeding!” as he beheld the master-at-arms standing near the gangway, and passing his arms over the large sleeves and other parts of the dress of such females as came on board from the boats alongside.

“ Ah,” returned Croiser, “ that appears somewhat of a license to landsmen, but it is a necessary search, for these ladies are in the habit of

bringing off spirit in bladders concealed about their persons for the consumption of their beloved Joes on board."

"Bah! you don't say so! well, that's droll! Hah! and it's true," Rannolini continued, pointing down on the deck below. "Trust the women for surpassing the lords of the creation in cunning! Look you at that woman—I saw her narrowly examined by the sergeant, and directly she got below, she pulled off her bonnet and took a bladderful of spirits from inside of its crown. She has given it to that sailor, much to his delight!—That's comical!" Here they were interrupted by the first lieutenant. He was sent by his captain to inquire what was the purport of their visit. Croiser having explained, they were taken aft and introduced to the *.

Rannolini was still in the same dress as that in which he reached the shore, a kind of great-coat composed of dark brown cloth, with a round straw hat. Although this costume afforded the greatest possible contrast to the one which he was usually accustomed to wear, and although it was manifestly unbecoming to his person, yet there was an indefinable something which, if it did not speak,

at least 'breathed itself to life' in his pale and pensive countenance, and challenged the admiration of the beholder. No one could behold those features without involuntarily scanning them once more. The soul that beamed in his singular eye, defied you to think otherwise than highly of it, and when its owner made the first advances towards an intimacy, self-pride induced you to return this attention which you could not but feel was flattering, though scarcely able to say why.

Such was the case with the *. Rannolini had his own motives for making a favourable impression, and he succeeded so well that without dreaming of the person whom he was addressing, the * went round with him in person to shew the ship.

The first lieutenant, on this, imagined that they must be some people of distinction, and was rather officious, so much so, that at last when he was saying something to Rannolini about the use of the main-staysail, the * turned round, and not knowing that Croiser spoke English, exclaimed, in an under tone—"The devil take Sch—mb—g!—these fellows will think I'm not captain of my own ship by and by!"

Having seen every thing likely to interest a foreigner, and been much gratified, they departed for the dock-yard; Rannolini being very favourably impressed with the ready and sailor-like energy of the illustrious officer left behind, as well as amused at the natural wish to appear the commander of his own frigate.

“ I wish to Heaven !” he said, “ that my brother — were as good an *enseigne de vaisseaux* ! — but you English take to sea naturally like Newfoundland dogs ; while I fear that French poodles are but indifferently fitted for it at the best—indeed we have no right to expect more than the dominion of the earth, but we shall see !”

They then pursued their way to the dock-yard, the inspection of which being finished, they took horse and examined the line of fortification extending round the neighbourhood. But enough of ships, arsenals, and entrenchments; we will now return to Charlotte, who, transported at finding herself once more within those well-known and venerable walls, went dancing about the house as if to shew her intimacy with each cherished

spot. Every thing wore the face of a friend loved—long absent, and now recovered. The rushing of the wind through the trees surrounding the ancient mansion, its roar as it volumed down the gothic chimney and sighed among the turreted towers and the massive granite keep; the gloom of the oak pannelling around, the varied view of land and sea through the latticed and lanceolated windows, all spoke of the past, and breathed forth many a fond remembrance.

Having held a long conference with her Abigail, she bounded forth as wildly as any roe that ranged the surrounding forests, and having called Marengo to her side, and carressed the faithful animal with all the affection of an old acquaintance, she sprung fearlessly on his back, and set off at a gallop over the grounds, as full of mirth and innocence as mortal mind could be. On reaching the lodge that bounded the southern extremity of the park near Cawsand, she chatted for a few minutes to the wife of the tenant who kept it, admired her curly-headed children, and commended the neatness which the antique cottage and nicely trimmed garden exhibited, dismissed Marengo, and then

prepared to return on foot through the beautifully laid out shrubbery, which overhung the sea chafing the foot of the rocky precipice beneath.

These delightful walks, which, owing to the indentations of the land and irregular encroachments of the ocean, extended nearly five miles in length, afforded a series of the most picturesque views which the reader can possibly imagine. Traced in various serpentine directions on the brow of the mountain, which had been originally covered with wood, a maze of exotic verdure seemed to spring up around. The strawberry arbutus, the geranium, the cestus, the quivering cork trees, the gigantic and flowering laurel, with the innumerable species of bays, and many others, while they conveyed the idea of a more genial climate to the eye, excited the senses still more by their luxurious fragrance. Nor were the natives of our isle excluded. The beech, the oak, the birch, the ash, the elm, all reared their heads to view, and supported with their boles the fragile but odorous honeysuckle that climbed around in seeming playfulness, and bloomed sweetly beneath. When the sun was in the heavens, and a gentle breeze ruffling the deep

blue of the bay, the beholder might imagine himself suddenly transported to the blissful island of Calypso. Anon, the wind springs up from the south-east and drives the surges of the ocean before it, till they thunder on the shore and dash their spray up in jets from the broken cliffs below—the trees around bend fearfully to the blast in which yon black pine, jutting over the deep, waves its arms as if rejoicing in its native element, while the vast cedar, close at hand, green in the youth of some eighty winters, towers with its horizontal and waving branches into the murky sky, and completes the wildness of the scene, that, as Rannolini said, seemed rather to be kindred with the invigorating North.

As Charlotte clapped her hands for Marengo to depart, the faithful creature laid its forehead near her to be caressed once more, as if it had mourned its mistress' absence, then, notwithstanding repeated signs to be gone, followed her till she arrived at the gate which shut the deer out from the plantations: being denied admittance through this, it remained gazing until her drapery was no longer visible through the intricacies of the wood,

when neighing twice, and finding no answer save the mocking echo, it reluctantly turned and set off at full speed.

Charlotte had not proceeded very far, when she met her father attended by the park-keeper and some of his men, engaged in cutting laurel for the ensuing evening. Passing on a little further, her attention was suddenly arrested by hearing some one exclaim—"By Jove, that's a pretty face!" Such a sentence was never lost on Chatty. On the instant she ceased singing the lively air then on her lips, and stopped to see this unknown admirer. She heard a hasty step among the paths below, as if the person were desirous of overtaking her; and presently an officer emerged from the shrubbery and stood on the path immediately before her. He not expecting to find her behind him, was about to set off in chase. Chatty saw this, and re-commenced her air—he turned—and presented to her view a post-captain in full dress. He appeared to be extremely young for his rank. His person was of a height well adapted for a sailor, and strongly made; his features were handsome, his complexion was florid, he had light curly hair, and the expression of his blue

eye, as well as the smile around his mouth, spoke of much good temper. Fastidious as Chatty was in her admiration of male beauty, she was much pleased with the appearance of the stranger, and with some curiosity waited to see if he would address her. The stranger also paused, and well he might, for her beauty was of the most striking description. Suddenly bursting upon him as it did, he was not a little confused. After a few moments' hesitation he advanced, saying—

“Ahem—Will you be kind enough to tell me, my good girl, if Sir Richard Salisbury, the Port Admiral, is not at present residing on Mount Edgecumbe?”

At this question Chatty hung down her head to conceal a smile. In her artless haste to run out, she had put on what the ladies call a cottage bonnet, and her morning dress being very simple, and her hair somewhat out of order with riding, as well as a worn out pair of gloves being on her taper fingers, the officer had mistaken her for some native rustic.

Entering at once into the spirit of the joke, she looked up with the most *naïve* and demure expression, then dropping a profound curtsy, while

she assumed a slight cast of the Devonshire dialect, answered, "Yes, please you, sir, he does!"

"Ah!—Oh!—he does—and is it at hand—that is, I mean to say"—drawing nearer to her side—"is the house far off?"

"Not very far, may't please ye, sir!"

"Oh!—ehem—oh—and—who—that is, what—who may you be, my good girl?"

"Me, sir," dropping a still lower curtsey, "I be the daughter of an old sailor who resides on the estate."

"Oh, a sailor!—and what has a sailor to do on the estate?"

"Why, please you, sir, he's cutting wood at present, and he's generally some little thing or other to do, for Sir Richard, God bless him! has always been very kind to father, and done all he can for him!"

"Well, that's very kind! I suppose he's an old follower of the Port Admiral's."

"I can't say, sir, I'm sure, sir, whether father's an old follower of Sir Richard's; but I know, sir, he's most always been with him, and served with him a very long time indeed!"

"Well, well! that's what I mean; but you should say served *under* him, not with him."

“Should I, sir? then please sir, I will next time.”

“Yes, do. Well, my good girl, I think your father’s got a very pretty daughter.”

“What did you say, please you, sir? Sister’s up at the house at present!”

“Oh!—(what a simple beauty she is!) I didn’t mean your sister, I was speaking about you—you’re a devilish pretty girl, I say.”

“Lo! sir, you’re very good to think so, sir!” replied Chatty, holding down her head, and curtsying to the ground, while the other edged a little nearer as he continued, “Ehem—yes—yes, you are, I must say, dev’lish pretty—I say my good girl, I should like to give you a kiss!”

“Oh, sir!—you—you’re very kind, sir! but what would father say?” and pretending as much confusion as she could, Chatty appeared to draw back, while the officer jumped forward and caught her in his arms. It was foreign to Charlotte’s feelings to resist so harmless a salute, she therefore allowed him to profit by his opportunity, half shutting her eyelids, while the blood suffused her beautiful countenance, and quietly drawing off the glove from her right hand, she watched her mo-

ment when the officer, having finished his devoirs, was engaged in once more placing her safely on the ground. Quickly swinging her little arm round, she gave him a slap on his unprotected cheek that awoke every echo among the surrounding trees; then bursting into a loud laugh, she scampered back at full speed through the path by which she had come.

The young officer no sooner felt this retaliation, than he gave instant chase, exclaiming half in passion, half in joke—"You good for nothing little devil!" This was not the first time that Chatty had engaged in a race, and despite of the different sex her light foot promised to hold him a long pull. As there were a great many turnings at that part of the road where this scene occurred, the officer now lost sight of her for a few moments—now he gained a view of the chase again, but at no moment was he in any danger of losing the scent, for the incident had so tickled Chatty's fancy, that she literally screamed with laughter, that pealed through the woods on every side, and invited the officer to overtake his prize. As the fit increased on her, it

impeded her running; once or twice she was very nearly falling, and he now came rapidly up with her, when a turning in the road hid her from his sight. Putting forth his speed, he bounced round the projecting point. What was his surprise to find himself in the midst of five or six men cutting the evergreens, while the fair object of his pursuit was hanging breathless with her merriment, round the neck of a tall man! The latter had his back turned towards the pursuer, and was dressed in a blue great coat and round glazed hat. Hearing the sudden noise behind him, he turned towards the officer who was hesitating what to do. The latter no sooner saw his fine manly countenance than he started back in amazement, muttering, "Confound it! The Port Admiral, by Jupiter!"

Sir Richard—for it was he—at once recognised the officer, and advancing in a good natured manner but with a profound bow, said, "I hope I see — — — well!" It was indeed no less a personage than the *.

"'Well, well'?—oh! devilish well, Sir Richard!" rejoined the * laughing, as he rubbed his

cheek, and then held out his hand to his superior, not exactly knowing what to say.—“ I fear, Admiral, I have to apologize for”——

“ Nay,” interrupted Charlotte with much grace, and some blushes, “ I fear it is I who have to apologize to — — —. I certainly was not aware of the illustrious rank by which I was distinguished—but I can only say in extenuation, that the next time so small a favour is thought worth the rifling, it shall be granted to —— ——— for the honour: and I am sure,” looking up to Sir Richard, “ ‘ Father, the old sailor,’ wont say anything against it, nor the Port Admiral neither.” The joke was then explained to the old officer, who having shaken his sides at the same, and given his directions to the park-keeper, proceeded to conduct his illustrious guest to the house. Charlotte now leaning on his arm was internally delighted at the idea—however accidentally—of having laid her fingers on the cheek of collateral ——, and he as a gallant and proper officer, holding with Frederick the Great—that no dishonour could come from the hand of a lady who was at once of great beauty and honourable birth. Nay, truth to say, I doubt not that he would have been

very glad to win the same favours from many a proud beauty in the land, even though it were at the same cost—at least I've known many who would, and I can answer for myself—though to be sure—a most material point as * * would say. I boast of no r—y—l blood in my veins, save such as may have filtered down and muddied in its descent for the last couple of hundred years, since the good old days of Queen Bess; when my ever-to-be-venerated ancestor the celebrated king——; but I forget THE PORT ADMIRAL.

CHAPTER III.

“ Among much elegance and beauty they had attracted a great degree of the public attention, being certainly two of the handsomest women present. The Prince took much notice of both, particularly of * * with whom he danced.”

WAVERLEY.

THE evening of the ball, the expected, the desired evening, at length arrived. All the nobility and gentry of the surrounding country—as the newspapers express it—were present, as well as the naval and military officers, the former amounting to no slight number, which included two of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. These were Sir George Monmouth and the senior naval Admiral * * *. They had only arrived that morning, and—humble souls!—had graciously condescended to honour the Port Admiral’s *fête* with their distinguished presence. Not fewer than five hundred of the *élite* of Devon were supposed to

be present, and all agreed in pronouncing it to be the gayest turn-out that had dazzled their eyes for many many moons.

Among the numerous faces gleaming forth in all the brightness of beauty, and bestowing heart aches with each smile, none could vie with the fair twins. It was true that the suffering and privation, through which they had so miraculously struggled, appeared to have reduced them considerably, but the interval of ease and pleasure which they had enjoyed on board the Pearl had greatly restored them, and what they now lost in actual symmetry of form was more than made up by that interesting languor which we find so attractive in woman suffering under pain or sorrow, or to speak as truly and more briefly in woman suffering at all.

When Rannolini heard of the fête, he suggested to his "sisters of the sea," that they should support the characters of Naiads of the deep. This jumped admirably with Chatty's fancy, and as usual the amiable Margarita was too good-natured to offer any opposition. Their dress was simple yet splendid, and though somewhat similar, yet strongly marking their different characters. Both were to

wear chaplets of coral, and loose flowing silver tunics. Charlotte's red wreath was clasped in front with a gorgeous aigrette of rubies, which blazed from out her jet dark hair like the fabled star of the fairy prince. The scarlet flowers of the almond tree were interwoven with her crown, a sapphire necklace encircled her richly turned neck, and bracelets of the same beautiful gem were clasped round her little wrists. Her complexion was that of a brunette, and their azure tints were well chosen to relieve the skin as well as to harmonize with the light blue boddice over which her silver robes were flung. As Lady Sapphira sapiently remarked on seeing her come forth from her toilette thus arrayed, "*Artis est celare artem*," and in her case it was perfectly true. There she stood—art had done every thing it could, yet not the slightest art was apparent, nor was the concealment of it any art in her. Her native and dazzling beauty shamed it all. Her jewels to be sure were costly and accorded with her rank, but the gleam of the sapphires were eclipsed by her eyes, and the coral looked coarse, and the ruby blushed beside the bloom on her cheek. In the dress of neither her nor her sister were to be seen any of what is in

painting termed finniking strokes—all were broad and bold—you saw nothing of the milliner's thimble and needle, but an elegant dress far eclipsed by a beauteous woman ; and I would recommend the consideration of this to such of my fair young readers who may have an eye to the captivation of us poor men !!

Margarita also wore a silver tunic, but it was on a white ground. The coral that confined her luxuriant auburn tresses was of the same pure colour, it seemed to have been plucked from the reef where it grew near “the still vext Bermoothes,” and woven into a coronet by the fairy fingers of some attendant Ariel. It had been so well contrived that it bore no traces of having ever passed through the jeweller's hands save in the resplendent diamond that united the ends and darted forth its many prismatic hues from her snowy forehead like the rainbow that glistens amid the fleece of heaven—it was a family stone, once a royal gift, and since an heir-loom. On her arms and neck were strings of large and magnificent pearls, yet they were but little seen at a distance, for neither in softness nor purity of colour did they excel the innocent bosom on which they lay.

Her hair as usual hung about her in rich clusters, and she seemed if possible more winningly fair and lovely than ever.

The quiet elegance and grace of her person, the dove-like tenderness of her light and liquid hazel eye, agreed admirably with the maiden purity of her dress. At every step the passing breeze bore away a rich perfume from the orange and lemon flowers intertwined with her coral chaplet, and presented by Jamie Maxwell to "his braw young lady, the maist sonsie lass o' the haill country-side, be the ither wha she might, no to mention her sister the leddy Charlotte, for wi' twa buds on ae stem it was mickle to tell between them."

As Croiser gazed in rapture on the placid but most expressive loveliness of his young enchantress, he sighed and thought how worthy she was to be the mistress of the noblest poet's dream of love. "What," thought he, "can be added to such masterpieces of God's hand save immortality?"

The Port Admiral himself, busy in setting the utmost flow to the tide of hospitality, was in the very height of his glory, nor was there a more noble

figure throughout the whole assemblage. His fine and commanding person, adorned with all the splendours of his rank, was seen every where doing the generous honours of his feast; but it was chiefly among the ladies that he now shone conspicuous. Uniting all the politeness which he could so readily assume, to the overflowing good nature of his own heart; and possessed of all the fluency of the Irish, with whom his blood had mingled, there were few more calculated to please the softer sex, or more happy in so doing, and none more successful.

He wore the Port Admiral's full uniform. It consisted of a very long-tailed coat, the edges, lapels, pocket flaps, and button-holes of which were heavily bound with broad gold-lace. The long bars of the latter were so thickly laid on the breast, that it seemed more like a complete cuirass of the precious metal than aught, except where the collar sloping off round the neck, displayed the fine and carefully protected cambric frill. The same profusion of lace was visible on the large and laboured cuff, where a pair of handsome muslin ruffles decked those veteran hands that had often done their owner important

service. The waistcoat was of white kerseymere, descending considerably below the waist, its huge lappels being visible between the slopings of the turned-back coat, that revealed the glitter beneath. Gold-seamed pantaloons, also of white kerseymere; silver clocked silk stockings; high-quartered shoes, with large gold buckles, completed Sir Richard's costume, with him a favourite one, since, despite of his time of life, he could boast of a leg which many much younger men envied in vain. Alas, poor humanity! when envy can be produced by a larger development of the biceps muscle being evident in one man than it is in another! If the reader adds to this sketch, a superb diamond-belted rapier presented to him by the city of London, on his memorable action of * * * * *, and four stars of as many orders, which hung gleaming on his breast, he will have before him the noble figure of Sir Richard Salisbury, as he appeared on the night of this fête, and drew forth Rannolini's unmingled admiration. Two dowager countesses, highly delighted with their gallant, were hanging on his arm, beneath which he also contrived to carry his large and singular three-cornered cocked-hat, bound at

all points with the broad gold. His hair curling naturally over his open forehead, bloomed in all the beauty of Orris powder, and his well ordered cue hung three parts down his back. Bless my soul! how altered are all these good old things since my time! Now-a-days an old fellow like me scarcely knows himself, bound up in full tog, and going to wait on my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and be —— to them—I had almost said.

The scene around was indeed brilliant. The old building itself seemed a perfect palace of light. The ancient hall was given up to the dancers; the remainder of the ground suite was laid out for the supper, and the withdrawing rooms above devoted to cards and music. Saving the very old, there were but few whist-devotees; the chief scene of magnificence was without, where the view presented seemed rather such as might have been called forth by the stroke of some enchanter's wand, than a mere mortal revelry.

The outside of the old castle itself was completely hung with lamps of every hue and colour—tier above tier, and range over range. The lines

of the battlements, the copings, the mouldings of the towers were all preserved in outlines of fire, as was also the old granite entablature over the Gothic door-way, which bore the sculptured scutcheon of the family; while the lights from within beamed brightly forth from the pointed windows. The low railing of the surrounding terrace was hung in the same manner, as well as the carved pine apples that surmounted each low capital, even to the very flight of steps that led from the lawn; while lamps placed on the flower-beds before the windows, revealed their form.

Fortunately for the full display of art, there happened to be no moon, and the night, though exceedingly fine and nearly calm, was quite dark. The effect of this illumination, therefore, was redoubled, when standing on a higher ground, the eye looked down on this castle of glare, and Fancy suggested that it beheld the palace of the Prince of Evil, visible through the dark and deep abyss. If on the other hand you viewed it from the declivity of the lawn immediately below, this brilliant structure of light hanging in mid-air, might be deemed some alhambra of Moorish genii, which the stranger had suddenly

encountered, afraid to breathe lest the motion of the air should dispel so entrancing a vision, while the gay and fairy figures around, sporting about the many tents pitched and lighted up in different parts of the park, might be taken for the elfin inhabitants, as yet unconscious of an unhallowed intruder.

The noble avenue of trees leading from the lodge to the mansion blazed forth in resplendent beauty. Innumerable lamps of a light green colour, in imitation of their foliage, made it seem as though an army of glow worms had taken up the branches for their quarters, while the blaze of light shed down on the lawn below, discovered fresh groups of females in all the sheen and show of diamonds, feathers, and other costly articles of dress.

One quarter of the space, amounting to some three or four hundred yards, had been temporarily planked over and chalked for dancing, and not less than two hundred of the youngest and most graceful of the assembly were seen moving to the mirth-inspiring sounds of performers that had been collected from all quarters. The different military and naval bands were in attendance, and foremost among them that which I now believe

owns no superior in England—the marine band of the division. The softer instruments being selected for the dancing, the rest were dispersed throughout different parts of the grounds, and mingling with the murmuring hum of approbation and delight arose from the deep recesses of the woods, the inspiring sounds of martial music, and the startling clang of trump and drum: presently in an opposite direction might be heard the beautiful deep harmony of human voices that swelled and rose upon the ear, until the excited nerves of the listener made the heart propel its vital current with such velocity, that it seemed to impart to every vein through which it flowed, a fiery glow of fervour.

Croiser and Rannolini had been strolling about arm in arm amidst this gay scene, the latter delighted with the contrast which such a view offered to those lately forced on him. He admired every thing; each new object around seemed to impart fresh delight; but above all he seemed to admire the old Port Admiral. Several times he exclaimed “Ah, if France had twenty of those men—Do you utterly despair of making any thing of him, Croiser? What fools are English rulers to

think of neglecting such men for her army! What madness! What political insanity! An army! Bah! What has an island to do with an army? She ought to foster her seamen as the only bulwark can protect her. But we shall prove the truth of this—it is France—it is ourselves who are to profit by all this. Blockheads! let them proceed. But when the French tri-colour flies on the palace of St. James', and four hundred thousand of the *élite* of France make good a line of communication from Dover to Pall Mall, when the navy with trebled pay obeys the republic of the British isles, and the Tories suddenly find themselves shipped off to take an involuntary refuge in that America which they long oppressed, and now more foolishly insult;—then it is that—hah, Croiser! what have we here?"—and Rannolini suddenly turned and faced to his left, where issuing from the over-arched pathway that led down from the house, was seen a procession which instantly attracted his attention.

First came twelve sailors gaily decked in the dress of their calling. They wore white painted hats, with little low crowns. Around these were tied long streaming black ribbons, bearing imprint-

ed in letters of gold, the name of the "Queen Charlotte," the admiral's guard-ship. They bore on their shoulders a superb model of a British seventy-four. The twelve bearers were the finest men that could be picked out from among the crew of their vessel. Around their waists were buckled their ship's cutlasses, and in their belts were stuck the long barrels of their boarding pistols. With one shoulder they supported the model, while with the other hand each man held out a roman candle, the glare of which fell with dazzling effect on the rigging of the mimic seventy-four, and after displaying their good-natured, but grim and rough, hairy faces, it glanced along the polished arms that adorned their large strong figures, and made them look a most complete set of naval myrmidons. A choice band of fifty, accoutred in the same style, followed behind, in serried order, and all united in chanting a wild but melodious song, which they had acquired with much perfection. The song itself was chanted by some twenty, while at regular intervals pealed forth the chorus with one universal burst from all. The time of the song was so contrived, that the burden broke

forth just as the Roman candles discharged their white globules of fire into the air with a loud explosion.—In this way they proceeded through the grounds, received every where with a shout of enthusiasm, the beautiful women showering flowers on them as they passed, the officers and gentlemen flinging coin upon the decks of the model.

They were headed by a gigantic seaman, who towered far above all the rest, as much as he exceeded them in bulk. His Herculean feet performed with the greatest rapidity, the many evolutions of a kind of fandango dance, much in favour among the sailors. He was dressed quite at variance with the rest, being in a common sailor's attire of jacket and trowsers, both considerably patched; the former hemmed with black canvass on all its seams. His body oscillated to and fro with considerable motion, while he waved his arms over his head with many violent gestures. His right hand contained a bright polished pewter brandy bottle; his left a little pipe, black from constant use; and the application of first one and then the other to his mouth was, it must be confessed, rather frequent. There he rolled along apparently delighted—the usual frown on his

brow, and smile round his mouth, rendered still more comical by the cunning twinkle which his features always exhibited when he had been indulging in the pleasures of the bottle—Need I say it was Nine-fathom Tim?—He had been especially requested by the Port Admiral to head the procession; but he refused to have any thing to do, he said, with “H. M. sarvice,” and only consented to take the lead, if permitted to dress as he pleased.

Altogether the effect was admirable. As Rannolini beheld this glittering show advance from beneath the dark shadow of the woods, the stern and startling glance which the interrupted topic had called up within his eye, was succeeded by one of pleasure and admiration. After listening to their wild harmony, and seeing them file past, he said, “What is that song which they are singing? I heard it once or twice yesterday—it seems to excite much ardor.—Interpret to me, Croiser;”—but Croiser appeared not to hear the request. It was repeated.

“Why,” returned the latter obliged to say something, “I fear you will not be pleased with the interpretation.”

“ Oh, I thought so!—well, never mind, let me hear it!”

“ Why, then the truth is, it is a song composed to excite the people against the threatened invasion of the army of Boulogne, and is at present sung throughout the country; that chorus which they all chant so stoutly, is a defiance to the effect of this—

‘ Nor Gallia’s barks,
Nor sans culottes,
Shall land upon our coasts.’”

“ Bah!” interrupted Rannolini, with his usual interjection, at the same time knitting his brows, while anger clouded his noble feature —“ and can they even at the giddiest moments of merriment like this, share their gay thoughts with apprehensions of danger?—How widely different are the temperaments of the two people! but it is because the English have been taught, that we come to conquer *them*, not their *tyrants*—have been taught to believe, that we wish to *enslave*, not to *emancipate* them!”

It was evident that this little incident had seriously discomposed him; it seemed as if in the moment when his mighty soul was pondering over

her mightiest schemes, the indomitable spirit of the people to whom he was opposed, had arisen embodied as it were before him, to dash down the fairy forms of his imagination. He muttered "That old Admiral is worth a hundred Pitts—it is indeed their seventy-fours alone that can defy us—these are their only bulwarks!"—then waving his hand peremptorily to Croiser—"Leave me—I wish to walk alone for an hour. By that time you will find me in the private gardens:"—and folding his arms on his breast, and bending his head towards the ground, he walked somewhat sullenly away.

Striding with slow step beneath the trees which flanked the garden wall, Rannolini arrived at the lodge, where stood old Jamie Maxwell, his wife, and several of the under gardeners, contemplating the brilliant assemblage just before them on the lawn. Rannolini paused. All the carriages had been cleared away from outside the railing at the principal entrance which bounded the park, and a sort of avant-guard being maintained by a dozen constables, the assembled multitude beyond, that thronged from the neighbouring towns to gaze at the show, were permitted to indulge their

curiosity. Nor was this all; the generous old Admiral, disdaining to enjoy a happiness which others could see and yet not partake, had provided for such a contingency, and two oxen roasted whole, with hogsheads of right good ale and other proper viands, invited them to pledge the gallant veteran's health, and forbid the yellow-eyed fiend of jealousy to disturb their breasts at the display of his prosperity.

This pleasing sight having for a few minutes diverted the gloomy ideas whose vastness almost oppressed the very soul that conceived them, Rannolini turned quickly to enter the garden lodge, when Jamie—"Douce and honest lad as his mither had aye ca'd him lang syne—mairs the pity that he should hae to say sae"—Jamie, I say, ever on the alert to shine the monarch "o' his peculiar province," touched his hat and prepared to hobble on with the aid of his crutch through the gardens, his light-blue coat and plated buttons visible in the glare.

"A blythe and a heartsome night this, your honour!" said Jamie, half turning his sharp but withered countenance over his shoulder to see that his prey was following. "Doubtless your honour's

come to tak a glint at the garden, and muckle it says for your discrimination, for though it's Jamie Maxwell himsel wha's obligated to say sae, there's no a better assortit and cultivated spot o' grun' atween this and Woburn, whilk, as your honour will ca' to remembrance, is the manse of Francis Duke o' Bedford, the mair that the orticultural matters, as the latter ca's it, is under the skeelfu' guiding o' an honest lad wha, your honour will mind to hae seen when ye saw the manse; a blude friend o' mine, your honour, Adam Gordon, my fifth cousin by my mither's side, she was a Gordon, your honour—Douce honest lads she aye ca'd the pair o' us. A vera good maister, Adam says is the Duke, though between oursels, I ken some, and them no that far aff, that ca' him a daft claverin whig; but a's no gospel that's rounded into our lug in this warld. I like a liberal minded man, I canna say but I do. I was aye brought up to be ane mysel, and so was my cousin Adam, sir." While Jamie had thus been running on very much to his own satisfaction, Rannolini totally absorbed in the ideas which his mind presented to his contemplation, mechanically followed his conductor in silence. For the sake of the contrast

presented to the glare without, these gardens had with good taste been left almost entirely dark. After following through a short avenue of laurel and privet, they emerged into a large square and open space, surrounded on every side with trees. "This, your honour," resumed Jamie, pausing with much self importance, and drawing up his poor bent figure as well as he was able, while he proceeded to describe the spot. "This, I say, your honour maun ken is the Italian garden, and a maist tastefu' spot ye see it is, thanks to your humble servant, Jamie Maxwell,—no that my lord when he's at hame, doesna' contribute a hint or twa to mak the place tidy and decent. 'There's that hubble-bubble in the midst there, they ca't a fountain, that's ane o' his contrivances, by the same token sae are a' thae pagan stocks o' white senseless stane stuck up, ane here and t'other there, to mak belief o' men and women. Ah, your honour, they never did siccan things amang the Gordons; but wae's me! the canty auld times are gaun fast, and we've sair changes. Here's ane they ca' the Venis o' Meddychis, and anither Apollyon, ane o' the names o' *The Enemy*, God preserve us! no to name Antinus and Discobolus, and sic-like,

and a hunner ither daft-like names that your honour and mysel' kens are no to be found amang ony o' the clans o' bonny Scotland.—Ah, the Gordons wad never a had ony sic thing in their country, but this comes o' people rinning away frae their ain folk, and ganging like a parcel o' gaberlunzies to no man's land there, a-yont the sea, for I've heard that a' thae things cam frae there; the foul fiend drive them that made them to break the second commandment. This on our left ye will discern to be the conservative house, where we put a' the plants in the cauld weather; the orange trees, and the limmon trees, and the aloes, and mony mair that I scarce could tell ower 'twixt this and the morn, at e'en, for your honour will remark, we're ower near the sea; and the blasts are baith mair frequent and strong than a puir honest lad could wish. I'm sair pit to it sometimes anent the evergreen hedge o' the French garden, to keep it a' standing in the bitter sou'-easters that Providence sends us. These, ye'll remark, are sarcophagusses, where they say the heathen used to bury their dead,—unchristian-like cannibals that they are, no to gie their ain kith and kin seven feet o' the cauld earth. These that

ye see sae liberally distributit ower the garden are the orange and limmon trees, doubtless ye'll be maist suffocated wi the smell. Wae's me! it's no to compare with the bonny blossoms o' the heather and the gowden buds o' the broom that I used to wander amang lang syne. Waes me, sir, the times are aye growing waur and waur. There was ance, and that no sae lang back, when the winsome young twin lasses wad a ta'en a delicht in the flowers and wad hae plaguit me at my wark wi' 'Jamie Maxwell, gie me this flower o' the magnoly, or cultivate me sic a plant, or do this, or do that ;' but now-a-days I scarcely ever set eyes on their bonnie cheeks, they're aye flitting here, flitting there, like a swallow afore spring, the mair especially sin' that deep dark browed chiel o' a Croiser's come here, he cares mair for ae glint o' the ee o' my leddy Margaret, than for a' the posies atween this and the bonnie Hielands. Your honour, I must say, is a maist discreet body, and doubtless wi' considerable skeel in the noble learning of botanical natures, to think o' a' thae fules and neer-do-weels out there, kicking awa, and wearing out their braw gilt shoon to nae yirthly gude, let alane a' their unchristian instruments,

and to leave your honour and a douce honest lad like mysel a' alone in sae bonnie a place. They wadna ha' dun sae amang the Gordons!"

During this unceasing pouring forth of the pent-up spirit of old Jamie, Rannolini had for a very sufficient reason said nothing. Intent on his own thoughts, ignorant of the language in which he was addressed, and admiring the excellent taste with which this beautiful garden was laid out, he was in thought once more treading the dearly beloved soil of Italy, and revelling in the remembrance of all that such an association called up, unheeding the discontented yet not ill-natured remarks made by the douce honest lad of sixty years at his side.

There are moments when the most energetic minds instinctively relax, and the soul unconsciously indulges in a state of repose, while the contemplation is nevertheless engaged on subjects of interest and importance. This was at present the case with Rannolini, who ever welcomed these pleasing reveries, as he was in the habit of thinking that his best conceptions always had birth at such a time; when thought, wearied as it were with its own exertion, lapsed into a state of mo-

mentary lethargy to arouse unbidden and in greater strength than ever. But it was also remarkable that this only occurred to him when alone, or when ignorant of the presence of a second person. It has been remarked, and I believe with great truth, that nothing truly great was ever planned except in solitude. The presence of our fellow beings seems to degrade and lower the soaring spirit which flutters within our bosoms, as if the sight at once brought home to sad conviction the meanness of the prison in which it is confined. And here we cannot help tracing some slight connection between greatness and virtue; for though some might doubt that solitariness ennobles human views, all must confess its value in purifying the human heart, and happier is he than the mightiest conqueror whom Fortune has placed in a situation to smile on the surrounding turmoil in which he has no share. Alas! even then what barriers are necessary to shield the mind from peevishness and *ennui*! But I have sadly wandered from Rannolini, musing over the beauties of the Italian garden at Mount Edgumbe. It was a spot well worthy of his attention.

In the middle stood the fountain so much de-

spised by Janie ; it was a noble structure of some fourteen feet high, carved in white marble from an antique design, the little basin at the top, from which soared the jet, was supported by four caryatides, and under its shelter were disposed a quantity of variegated lamps. The fountain itself stood in a large reservoir of water, where swam many gold and silver fish. As the jet in its descent was scattered around, the many-coloured lamps gleamed through the broken and falling waters until they resembled one continued shower of brilliants. Rannolini stood on the bank contemplating this scene of enchantment. The scarcely moving air wafted past him loaded with the perfume of the orange flower, the magnolia, the ceringo, the Portuguese laurel, jassmine, clematis, lilly, jonquil and mignonette ; the joyous hum of the surrounding fête fell quenched as it were in the deep silence of the garden, unbroken, save by the falling fountain. The many beautiful statues were softly gleaming in the reflected light, till the beholder could almost fancy them living beings, and forms of exquisite beauty. Every thing around bespoke the elegant taste of the noble owner, it also spoke of calm—of happiness—of deep tranquillity. Alas!

not long did this holy feeling prevail in the mind of Rannolini.

He could bear its unbroken repose no longer—he turned hastily away, Jamie still going before him, like a shadow thrown by the setting sun, too busy in talking to desire an answer, and too much delighted with so patient a hearer, not to make the most of him.

The hour past, Croiser did not arrive, and Rannolini hastened to leave the garden, with a quick and impatient step, Jamie hobbling after him with the horrifying suspicion that he was about to be defrauded of his dearly loved *douceur*. Suddenly starting from his reverie, Rannolini turned round quickly, enquiring, in French — “What hour is it?”

“What wad your honour be wanting?” answered Jamie, coming up out of breath.

“What hour is it? Is it midnight yet?” again demanded Rannolini, comprehending by Jamie’s attitude that he was not heard.

“Wad your honour be pleased to speak a little louder?” answered Jamie, putting his hand to his ear and drawing still closer, “I’m a wee hard o’ hearing when folk speak sae lown.”

“Bah, what a ninny I am, the old imbecile doesn’t speak French!” and recollecting himself, Rannolini moved rapidly forward to depart, but there was an iron gate in the way, of which Jamie possessed the key, and was in no hurry to let his anticipated booty escape.

“Wad your honour no’ like to take a bit walk through the English garden, we hae missed that, and wad your honour no’ like to see Cowper’s Seat, and a bonny ane it is, your honour.”

“Open the gate, you old blockhead—open it, I say!” interrupted Rannolini, stamping.

“And wad your honour’s grace no’ like to sit in Thomson’s Temple?” continued the imperturbable Jamie, “it was ay’ a favourite with Francis, Duke of Bedford, (the Lord forgi’e me for telling sic a lee!)”—to himself,—(then aloud,) “and his grace is a liberal man—Adam Gordon says, he strives muckle to bring down the quartern loaf!” Here Rannolini, ignorant of the cause of his reluctance, convinced Jamie, by unequivocal signs, that he must either unlock the gate, or get his head broken. “Weel, weel, stir, if ye winna see them ye mauna, but dinna be in sic a de’il o’ a hurry, man.—I’m

like the deep water, ilka thing drapped into me is said naething about, though it should be agen a' rules, that a' douce honest lad should hae his hand crossed wi' a piece o' siller." Just at this moment, when Rannolini, stamping, and swearing in French, was unwilling to use violence against so old a man, even though so obstinate, Croiser appeared, and having gained admittance, and explained to Jamie that Rannolini was a foreigner, ignorant of his language, and slipped a piece into the hand of the douce honest lad, he took Rannolini back with him into the private gardens, leaving Jamie Maxwell muttering—"To think o' that, Fiend hae the baker—that I suld say sae!—Nae wonder that he didna' comprehend me—to think that I suld ha' been *obleeged* to say sae muckle to an unchristian cannibal loon that never kenned de'il a word o' the matter frae ane end to the ither! Nae wonder he was sae slow with his siller, he's nae mair notion that my mither was ane o' the Gordons than ——O'ons, as I live, that dark cheel's gi'en me gowd; to think o' Jamie Maxwell livin to ha' a gowd piece gi'en to him in these sair —— and gude gowd too!" examining it by the

light. “Weel, the times hae lang been sair, nae doubt the’re gaun to lighten at last—it’s a wearisome night that never sees the dawn; and as for the rest, the least’s said’s the soonest mended.—Maggy, lass, set the porritch on the table, it’s time for douce honest lads to be in bed.”

CHAPTER IV.

“ The holy vow,
The ring of gold, no fond illusions now.”

ROGERS.

“ WHAT do you think has just occurred?” said Croiser to Rannolini when they were alone.

“ Heaven knows!” replied the latter, somewhat startled.

“ Oh nothing of any particular consequence; but you shall hear. I had been dancing with Margarita, and was handing her to a seat, when I observed the wife of some military officer near at hand—the figure appeared familiar to me—she turned, and I saw it was ——” whispering in Rannolini’s ear. “ At that instant her eyes met mine, she recognised me, uttered a loud shriek, and fainted.”

“ How droll!”

“No, not exactly that either; but however, as you may imagine, there was no slight confusion. I helped to carry her to a private room, and the first thing her husband did was to call me somewhat peremptorily to an account. Having managed to defer this until every one had left the room except himself and wife, I explained.”

“But are you sure that they will be silent?”

“Quite, and indeed we are doubly safe; they are acquainted with nothing save my family name, and are utterly ignorant as to what service it is on which I am employed. I have their strictest promise of silence, and I am sure of them!”

“Well, that is right! It is a singular coincidence. But did not the circumstances attract much observation?”

“Not much. Margarita seemed very much astounded, and somewhat affected by it, but otherwise it excited little attention; and when I came away, they were all dancing as intently as if their lives depended on the motion of their heels. Charlotte foremost among them all, though it must be confessed that she was somewhat perplexed which to flirt with most—her old lover Falconer, or the gay young *.”

“Giddy beauty! but the * carried it, I am sure!”

“You’re right! and my lord, I promise you, appeared sufficiently savage!”

“What sort of a young man is he?—I take a great interest in all your naval gentry. I never saw a finer body of officers in my life than those so plentifully scattered about to-night. Who and what is this Lord Falconer?”

“A young viscount of rather good family and considerable property. Having formed a high idea of salt-water glory, he entered the navy, and succeeded to his estates and title by the sudden demise of his uncle. He is agreeable and accomplished, and his abilities, I believe, are calculated to add lustre to any coronet.”

“Hah! Those are the men I admire! Talent is always good, and genius is always precious, but neither are the worse for being of gentle birth. Surely I must have met him in the grounds—describe.”

“Met him! I don’t doubt it—he is tall—somewhat above my height. He has light hair and blue eyes, and one of the most handsome faces that I ever beheld on a man’s shoulders!”

"This girl's in luck it seems!"

"Yes, I think so; but with what different eyes do we behold each other's prospects! She does not care very much about him—perhaps because she sees how fondly attached he is to her, and partly, I believe, because she does not like so soft a disposition; but at all events she would leave him at any time to run after any one else. Poor Falconer! I watched him to-night as his eyes were fixed on the *. Certes, if his glances had been as penetrating as steel blades, there would have been high treason perpetrated in the hall."

"Silly girl! A pity with so much talent, beauty, and good nature, that she should be a coquette! That detestable female failing—the worst in their calendar—if they only knew how much they lower themselves by it. But bah! what are the women to us, provided they don't interfere with politics? Croiser, we leave for town to-morrow."

"I remember it," returned Croiser with a sigh, "what think you of the fête?"

"I think it is superb! I would that I could transport it, sailors and all, to the banks of the

Seine, and call them Frenchmen. But come, let us rejoin it!"

"No, I came here on purpose to tell you that at midnight a still more splendid spectacle is to commence—namely, a sea-fight in Barn Pool, and we cannot behold it from a better situation than that of the battery terrace."

"A naval action, and by night? This is indeed worth having staid for—let us hasten on!"

Midnight arrived, and the action commenced. Two frigates were opposed to each other—one on either side of the bay; around them a number of old fighters, fitted on purpose, with long masts, that cut up into the horizon. On board there were placed a quantity of small cannon, with men to work them, and the engagement proceeded to all appearance as if in earnest. The whole semi-circular line of coast, about a mile in length, being in that part of the grounds prepared for the fête, was thronged with the company.

From among the volumes of smoke, were seen the masts of the vessels wreathed in the sulphureous vapours that ascended, as from a scene of the direst carnage; while the incessant

flashes of the guns, afforded sufficient light to catch occasional glimpses of the masses of men on the various decks, and to behold the waters gleaming ruddily beneath. Every now and then a wild huzza broke through the roar of the cannon, and came joyfully upon the ear, as one vessel ran alongside another, and the crew took possession, or the different ship's companies cheered at their guns. Occasionally the temporarily-rigged spars fell with a crash into the waves, having been cut away by the crew on purpose; while some of the merry seamen, to give it a still more graphic effect, leapt overboard and swam from one ship to another, their heads distinctly seen from the shore brought out by the dark contrast with the gleaming waves. Others again going far beyond their instructions, set up a loud screeching which produced correspondent hysterics among the lady-beholders. In short, it was a most complete fac-simile of a night-action, excepting in one point—the absence of shot, the whizz of which were not to be heard in the air, nor their splashing to be seen in the water. After sustaining this scene for about an hour,

one party began to strike their colours. The boats were then seen crossing the bay, and the shouts of taking possession rang aloud. The victorious frigate warped out, followed by the captured prize, whose topmast and topgallant-mast having been struck on different parts, and the yards topped up and down, and braced about, made her appear in all the confusion of a vessel much cut up by shot. Lastly succeeded the boats towing out the prizes in different directions; the latter part of the entertainment being plainly visible by the glare cast from the flaming hull of an old lighter, prepared for the purpose and set on fire. As the flames flickered and towered toward the sky the spectators anxiously watched to see her blow up.

“Such, I suppose—though on a far grander scale—was the fatal battle of the Nile!” remarked Rannolini to Croiser, in a melancholy tone. He had scarcely pronounced the words when an unusual gleam burst forth from the burning wreck, reddening the sea and sky as far as the eye could reach. While the blackened and still mouldering timbers falling around, and the bellowing roar that disturbed the stillness of the night, pro-

claimed the final catastrophe. A dead pause succeeded. "Such was the fate of the L'Orient!" said Rannolini. A band on board the frigate here sent forth a burst of music whose harmony stole over the still trembling waters.

"That's good! I forget the name. What is it?"

"Britannia rules the waves!"

"True! too true! Come let us be gone!"

As they passed by the old block-house, at the end of the battery, Croiser heard some people in conversation; they were hid from sight, but as the accents fell on his ear he recognised in the two speakers Sir Richard Salisbury and one of the lords of the Adm—r—lty, who had come down on a visit of inspection.—"You may call it 'moonshine' if you like, Sir Richard," said the latter, "but I fear if these facts come to the knowledge of his Majesty's ministers, it will be denominated smuggling—a breach of our laws—and treated as such; particularly in one whose rank would warrant us in expecting him to prove a good example to his inferiors. I should really be very sorry to be instrumental in bringing about any inquiry that might hurt one I value so much as Sir Richard Salisbury.

If you could point out any path by which I could escape laying this serious information before Lord ——, but you see by suppressing it I might inculcate myself?"

"Well, well, sir; you shan't do that on my account," said the hearty Sir Richard. "For my part ye see I look upon it that the service pays us cursed badly, and these little affairs are the mere opportunities of office. A poor fellow by Jove may starve on an Admiral's pay if he has a family. Besides I shouldn't like to be popping off the hooks some day and leaving Chatty and Margiée without a shot in their locker. Moreover, after all, it's a mere difference of opinion. They think smuggling a bad thing, but as for me, why odds-bobs! I think it's a very good thing. Doesn't it, I should like to know, form a nursery for the navy?— Besides, sir, my view of political economy differs from that of his Majesty's ministers. I dislike the excise, confound 'em, oppressive rascals, sir, very oppressive. Every honest hearted man's duty is to oppose them, and then again, I'm so used to it ever since I was a boy—'twould break my heart I do believe to leave it off, which wouldn't stop the matter. However, what you say is very true—I can only repeat at

present, that *you* shall never be a loser through Richard Salisbury.”——The Lord of the Adm—r—lty slept at the house that night, and on retiring to his chamber, found on his dressing table a sealed letter superscribed for himself. He opened it. Within was a bill, drawn on a certain house in London, for five hundred pounds, “the amount of his share for ‘*moonshine*,’ received.” The bill only required his signature to be available, while the envelope contained these words. “The endorser by using a similar form is at liberty to draw on Messrs. * * * * * every quarter.” Suffice it to say here, that it was tendered, accepted, and paid. The Lord of the Adm—r—lty gained an additional increase of two thousand a-year by the visit of inspection, during which he learnt of Sir Richard’s smuggling. Nor did the hearty old officer ever hear one word more about his moonshine being laid before his Majesty’s ministers; so far from that, it continued “moonshine” to the last. He regularly kept up his correspondence and partnership with a celebrated house in town which realized many thousands a year, and to the last used to delight in going disguised to an occasional landing when the night was fine, and his friend skipper Derrick was on duty, as on the memor-

able evening, when the reader is aware that he escaped at the expense of his "stern-post."

But to return to our heroes.—The mock engagement being over, the delighted spectators flocked to the supper-table. The last was supplied in the first style of munificence—which made the Adm—r—lty man mutter "the Devil! This fellow needs to smuggle to support his extravagance!" In a more reflecting tone, however, on the next morning, he remarked "Well, Sir Richard does deserve a little license, for he is as liberal as a prince."

On his return to the house, Rannolini met the party of sailors once more with their model. As he recognized the air his brow darkened, then presently clearing again, he said to Croiser—"Give those fellows something for me. After all they are actuated by the love of country. It is a noble feeling! None can be more honourable! Come, it is time to go to rest."

Croiser having attended the foreigner to his room, and seen that all his wants were supplied, returned to Margarita and the banquet. She knew that he was about to depart on the following day—she dreaded it might be for ever, yet scarcely would acknowledge such a feeling to

herself. She was sensible of his approach to her side, by that secret throbbing of the heart which surprises us when the object of our love is nigh, and she received him with the mingled feelings of affection and coolness that struggled in her bosom. Affection for the man to whom she owed her life twice over, and coolness for one who concealed himself in the most impenetrable mystery even from those to whom it was evident that he was so deeply attached.

Poor Margarita! She was distracted between a multiplicity of emotions. Now she beheld him noble—clever—attractive—generous—spirited yet tender—all that fond woman could paint in a fancied lover—all that her warm romantic spirit had so often painted. Again she read in that wild eye more than she wished to comprehend; a feeling of fear was mixed with her affection. What had given rise to that intractable fierceness that broke from him in unguarded moments? Who was he? On what purpose could that determined mind be bent? Then again the fragments of that startling conversation which she had heard him hold with Rannolini, when Croiser pronounced the rustling to be a deer in the underwood. Her suspicions too of the former, still more harrowing

from being afraid to breathe them, even to her sister. If true, they might be divulged! They might affect Croiser's life! Then again her love for her country, her sense of rectitude, honour, and principle. It was fearful to love him, and yet too late to arrive at such a conclusion.

Scarcely less moved was the object of her attachment. The increased strength which his passion had attained. The favourable lights in which the gentle Margarita had been shown to him, her unwonted courage, her firmness, discretion, and docility withal, as well as the sadness of the approaching hour that would separate them, the perils which he must surpass before they could meet again, the many chances that such a meeting would ever arrive to bless him—all these circumstances imparted to his manner and his sentiments an air and tone to which few women can long remain insensible. On one so favourably predisposed, how was their effect redoubled! His gentle yet impressive accents rose on Margarita's ear long after those fluent lips had ceased to meet her sight; when the dull hours were passed in abstracted reveries, Fancy again portraying his manly form as it had met her partial gaze that night, and golden Memory reproducing all that

he had uttered—as we still delight in the odour of those dried flowers whose freshness and bloom has, alas! fled from us. He never left her side for the remainder of the *fête*, till light breaking in the East, bade the revellers disperse, when she quitted Croiser for her pillow, soon to be moistened by her tears—the offspring of that exquisite grief which mingles with and softens the only pure bliss of our lives! On that same pillow slumbered the lively Charlotte; dreams of pleasure crowding on her brain, and now a noble lover, and now a r-y-l gallant and a brilliant foreigner did homage to her beauty, and added to her delight; so closely do joy and sadness meet. The many hundreds lately admiring the joyous scene around, were now getting to their homes, and with each roll of their carriages breathing a wish for repose. Alas! what is pleasure, such as men too frequently pursue it? A bubble!—a shadow!—an empty name! And does it not, as Goldsmith has so beautifully—and I fear too truly—said of friendship:—

“ Follow wealth and fame,
And leave the wretch to weep?”

Poor man! Though “lord of the creation!” we have never found, since the days of Joshua, that dame Nature pays the slightest regard to the direst extremities of the lordly animal.

Day did not dawn one moment later for those who were to be severed by its light. All arrangements were made; they were to start at ten at night. Rannolini had taken leave of the Port Admiral, who loaded him with thanks and offers of all service in his power, and the foreigner merely waited at his hotel for Croiser. The latter had returned to Mount Edgecumbe to say 'good bye' to Sir Richard and his family. The old veteran was if possible more kind than ever, wrung him by the hand with a grasp that made his fingers ache for an hour, as he finally said, "Fare ye well, my jolly boy, and whenever Dick Salisbury can serve a good turn to ye, why heart alive! all ye have to do is to tip him a stave."

Having gone through the parting compliments with Lady Sapphira and her two supporters, the captain and the major, Croiser looked round for Nathaniel in vain; on making enquiries for one whom he seemed at once to shun and yet to regard, he heard that the chaplain had been taken suddenly ill on the preceding night, and would see no one. Our young friend seemed more concerned at this than might have been expected, but apprehending nothing serious, contented himself with sending up his hopes that the invalid would soon recover.

Charlotte and Margarita were the only individuals of the family who remained for him to see. He found them in their boudoir. Margarita was sitting by herself near the window, pensively gazing on the beautiful expanse of the Sound, as the bright rays of Croiser's favourite star slept on its glittering bosom. Charlotte was seated in the middle of the room in an old high-backed chair. She listened with a sparkling eye to the compliments of the *, who sat on one side, and averted her countenance from the displeased looks of Lord Falconer, whose seat was on the other.

"And are you really going, my dear Captain Croiser? Well, I'm quite grieved to think so! What shall we do without you?"

"Nay, you need give yourself no concern on that head, as far as it relates to me individually. I leave those behind me who will more than make up for my absence."

"Come, Sir Captain, no quizzing! But I really should like to see you off, only at present I cannot leave my guests. Margiée will you atone for my negligence? We both saw him off when he last left us, now I resign that pleasure wholly to you again!"

Croiser was about to say it was unnecessary,

hut checked himself. Such a pleasure was more than he could hope, it was not for him to reject it. Margarita hesitated ; but Charlotte with a view of being left *tête-a-tête* with her gallants, pressed it. The evening was deliciously fine, the sun had but just set, and Margiée consenting, she walked with Croiser towards Barn Pool.

Both their hearts were too full for much conversation. The favourable opportunity that now presented itself, tempted Croiser to declare his love ; but the remembrance of the service on which he was engaged, the entire devotion which he was pledged to yield to another, and above all the vicissitudes to which his love would expose its object, all combined to deter him.

“ When shall we have the pleasure of seeing you again, Captain Croiser ? I hope no great interval will pass ! ”

“ I am sorry to say that I am utterly ignorant when that pleasure will again be permitted to me, so little my own master am I at present.”

“ I regret much to hear *that!* ” returned Margarita, with a marked emphasis and complete change of tone. Croiser was not aware of its exact meaning, and therefore replied—

“ I feel, deeply feel the kindness which prompts

you to say so, and can only assure you that however prolonged our separation, or whatever may be the events which occur in the interim, nothing can efface from my warmest remembrance one—’ sinking his voice, “whose loveliness, whose mind, whose warmth of heart endear her to all around !” He took her hand in his—it trembled violently—she endeavoured to speak—but no distinct accents met his ear further than the words—

“Then how much less can I forget the preserver of my life !”

“The obligation was more than repaid me by the pleasure,—name it not, or if you will allow me to presume on so poor a service, allow me to retain this as a cherished memento of Margarita Salisbury ?” withdrawing her glove from the delicate hand which he pressed to his lips. She made no reply—her agitation spoke for itself. He approached a step as if to repeat the question. She looked on the ground, and in the next instant their cheeks were softly pressed. In a broken voice he whispered “God bless you !” and well might Purity herself—

“Forgive the kiss,
That asked from form so fair no more than this !”

She turned—withdrew that lovely hand from his

clasp, and applying her handkerchief to her eye gazed intently on his saddened features—she retreated a step, looked round, waved her hand, then hurriedly disappeared among the trees.

Croiser remained fixed until the last gleam of her receding figure vanished from his eye. He fancied he heard a low indistinct sound as she turned away, and affection coined it into the word “Adieu!” Then it was, as his eye pierced the dark vista in vain, that he truly felt the loss he had sustained. Then it was that bitter memory painted in her richest lights each blissful moment of the past, whilst, to complete the picture, threw in her deep dark shadows of the future. There he remained, gazing in the direction in which she had gone, motionless, saving that his hand started as a burning tear dropped on it.

The faint starlight showed the boles of the trees distinctly to his view, as once or twice he imagined he beheld her form gliding between them. He bent his head and his eyes met the ground. There was the print of her tiny foot; that spot had supported her whom he might see no more!—It was sufficient; agonized by the thought, he flung himself on the sward and pressed it with his lips, apostrophizing it as though it had been sensible of

the passion which possessed him. He felt the cool fragrant dew act like a calming sedative on his perturbed spirit, as it bathed his fevered and throbbing temples. He plucked away the herbage which her light footstep had marked, and placed it in his bosom, then burying his face in his hands, he indulged in the sad images which his troubled brain presented. Every thing beside Margarita was forgotten, even the impatience with which Rannolini must be waiting his delayed arrival. "What," thought he, "does the world contain—to what prize do the paths of ambition lead to prove a recompence for this sacrifice of my affections? Or if there be that prize, is it one which can stimulate *me* in putting forth my powers to attain it? No. Yesterday I felt as a giant! No views, however vast, could have appalled me; no privations, sufferings, hardships or dangers could have kept me back! Nay, they would rather have impelled me to proceed!—Now! even the call of Rannolini would fall unheeded on my ear!—What am I now?—a fly!—a mortal worm! insignificant and weak. One passion, like a conflagration, has devoured all beside. Oh what a weight, what a burden is life! and doomed as we are to feel this, it is yet more galling from being

sensible of the link which involuntarily binds our affections to the earth. Vain, weak, silly Breast. Why should my happiness be dependent on viewing one set of features? Why should my ease be bound up in the glance of that eye? How can I ask? When was passion connected with reason? It is enough for me to feel—to mourn that it is so!”

Croiser was lying on the grass covering a little bank above the rocks of Barn Pool, where immediately beneath was his boat in which Nine-fathom Tim and his crew were waiting to row their master over the water to Dock. A slight breeze was occasionally seen to ruffle the sea which softly plashed on the shore below, while the gentle noise of the little ripples rolling back to their parent element, sounded like the sighs of ocean.

A light footstep was now heard as it pressed aside the long grass. Croiser slightly raising his head, watched to see who would approach. A tall female figure issued from among the trees. With a hesitating step it passed the spot, where Croiser, concealed by the shade of a large pine tree, was now lying. The figure silently gazed upon the water, gently swelling with its eternally moved bosom, while the reflection of the bright

planet above, was brilliantly thrown back from the dark surface where each tree on the neighbouring shore seemed to enjoy double life.

“Surely,” said Croiser inwardly, as he looked again—“it is—it must!—”

“He is gone!” said the figure with a sigh, as, after looking, she beheld no boat on the water.—“Yet what is he to me?—or rather what should he be? Surely he is more dear to me than I imagine! Surely more dear to me than he ought to be! since his departure can thus affect me—the departure of one who could leave me perhaps, as he said, ‘for ever,’ with the cool expressions of a mere acquaintance!”

“You are wrong, dearest Margarita, you are deceived,” cried Croiser, unable any longer to restrain himself, and springing to the side of his mistress—for it was herself. Scarcely could she believe her senses. She felt ready to sink beneath her confusion as she remembered that he must have heard her confession; and could only stammer out “Is it Captain Croiser?”

His situation was now totally changed. The feeling of consideration for her which had before restrained his declaration of love, now as plainly pointed out that it should be made, since what

could exceed the cruelty the dishonour of hearing such sentiments as had dropped from Margarita, and leaving her in suspense as to whether her passion were returned. Croiser perceived this, and once freed from his former scruples by a sense of the necessity of the moment, he was not slow in unfolding to one so dearly concerned, all that he had long felt towards her. Half an hour flew as though it had been a moment! and for that short space of bliss, how many long days of misery were they not doomed to experience!

Croiser having finally promised to return to her at the earliest moment which his avocations would permit, and Margarita having wished him much happiness, said “Do not, I beg, run yourself into peril, if it be only for the sake of those you leave behind. Rely on a deep and warm remembrance—and now—farewell!”

One more embrace, and they had parted—Croiser to skim over the sparkling waters to Ranolini, and Margiée after watching his boat fade into the darkness of the bay, to return disconsolate and sad to her room, there to weep over the many tokens she possessed of her mysterious wanderer—to treasure up all that he had said, and recall each attendant circumstance.

CHAPTER V.

“ *Auf.* What is thy name ?

“ *Cor.* A name unmusical to the Volscians’ ears, and harsh in sound to thine. Prepare thy brow to frown—Knowest thou me yet ? ”

CORIOLANUS.

A HASTY ebullition from Rannolini was the result of Croiser’s delay; and they set forward on their journey. Whenever they changed horses, he made Croiser question the postillions respecting every mile of road over which they were going, and give directions where they were to be stopped, and have the objects worthy of notice pointed out to them. These were chiefly the plains which lay in their route, the principal being Salisbury plain, the more open country about Basingstoke, and Hounslow heath.

At both Salisbury and Hounslow, Rannolini made the postillions dismount their horses, and leaving one for Croiser, while he took another,

they both rode over the ground together, the foreigner pointing out whatever he thought worthy of notice. As he had said, they arrived in London on Monday night. It was very late, and they instantly retired to rest. Breakfast having been discussed, Rannolini's first wish was to be driven to the house of *, the celebrated orator and statesman. Croiser's name was announced, and they were shown into the library, where this illustrious individual was deeply engaged in writing.

He had risen to receive his visitor, but anxious to finish a sentence, was still stooping and busy with his pen. He did not look up, but said in his usual affable tone, "Ah, Captain Croiser! I hope you are the bearer of pleasant news." Relinquishing his pen, he advanced. The first object which he beheld was the person of Rannolini. For a moment he hesitated; then bowed profoundly as if in the first moments of doubtful recognition, when Rannolini stepping forward, extended his hand, and remarked with much animation, "Aha, Mr. *, this is not so bad! so, my disguise is not to be penetrated even by you? I fulfil my word, you observe, for I am come to return the visit you paid to me in the Tuileries."

"What—do I—is it possible? Indeed, sir, I

feel highly honoured, though I scarcely thought it was to be accomplished in so short a time, even by *you*."

"Well, well, nothing is impossible. But you do not give me a welcome to this inaccessible land of yours; this second isle of Calypso. Neither Ulysses nor Telemachus ever met with more disasters in their approach, than Croiser and myself. But I suppose you esteem me lightly now that my two hundred thousand are left on the other side of the channel. I suppose your welcome is reserved until I return with them at my beck."

"Nay, sir," here Mr. * smiled incredulously; "if I reserve it till then, I greatly fear that you will never receive it. Since this very voyage must have convinced you of the truth of my arguments held with you in Paris, as to the utter impracticability of a successful invasion! To speak candidly, admiration and wonder at your present enterprize, have made me forget the courtesies of hospitality! Believe me I am delighted that my poor roof has the honour of receiving so illustrious a guest as M. Rannolini!"

A momentary pause ensued.

"Perhaps, Mr. *, you will excuse my absence for a short period," said Croiser. "*I can*

have no information to offer while M. Rannolini is present; and to avert delay, during your conversation, I can pay an unavoidable visit to Mr. Pitt."

"To *Pitt!*" echoed the foreigner, quickly catching at the name. "*Apropos*, Mr. *, I must contrive to look at your great rival."

"*Great* indeed!" replied *, musing, "though I must disclaim for myself any credit or importance which such a sentence might attach to me. Yes, great in genius decidedly, though wanting in forethought and consideration; and I should say of a mind rather brilliant and dazzling, than profound and lasting. That arrangement of yours, Captain Croiser, is good—I presume you return to us."

"Within two hours, sir," returned Croiser; and retiring from the study, he leaped into his carriage and drove off to the prime minister.

"You expressed a wish to have a sight of Mr. Pitt?" resumed *.

"Yes, if it could be accomplished with safety!"

"Certainly it can, by the simplest of all methods. Croiser shall have an order by means of which he can bring you into the House of Commons beneath the gallery. To-night ministers

move for leave to bring in the bill for * * * *, my party of course oppose it. I have a few words to offer on the subject. In all probability there will be a very warm debate, and therefore you will see him in all his glory. Moreover you will have the delight of hearing my friend Sheridan."

" Good—this is admirable! "

—— Leaving these two however engaged in a varied and interesting conversation, we must for a short space sink into an immeasurable bathos of character, and revisit a pair of very humble individuals in our history, namely, the marvellous Captain Bombast, and his obsequious satellite the wonderful Major Puff. In dispositions of this stamp curiosity ever forms a prominent feature, and in the present case the said pigmy quality had in these two persons, been excited to the greatest possible extent by the mystery enveloping Croiser and his foreign friend.

" I tell you, Puff, that I am morally convinced of its being very suspicious," repeated Bombast to the Major, for the tenth time, with a most knowing twinkle of the eye and suitable motion of the hand, as the night before the Port Admiral's fête they paced up and down in the garden behind the house—which has not hitherto been mentioned.

“ Yes,” continued Bombast, “ most suspicious indeed ! For my father always said, ‘ Beattall, my boy ! ’ Sir James used to say, ‘ it’s aye vera’ suspicious.’ ”

“ Exactly, Captain, so I think ; for when I was abroad in Ireland ”——

“ Yes, yes, I know all about *that*, but you don’t hear what I was going to say, Sir James always remarked that it was a suspicious circumstance when ye saw a man afraid that ilka body was going to jalouse him. Now, you must be well aware, Puff, that the force of the argument is doubled if the suspected person talk French.— I could give you an instance of it. There’s my first lieutenant when I was at the Longbow Islands.”

“ Yes, Captain, you’re right, I remember most perfectly. Indeed I’ve often remarked the same thing myself when I was abroad in Ireland.”

“ Aha, indeed ? Well then, Puff, to be short, it’s my idea that that Rannolini is a most suspicious looking fellow.”

“ Well, Captain, that’s just what I’ve been thinking all along.”

“ But did you remark his eye ? ”

“ Yes, that I did, Captain, and I never wish to

see such another again, going through and through one. I'm sure no loyal man could have such a pair. I know that we should never have listed such a man in the militia—that's to say, the line! And then the scornful way in which he seemed to take no notice of us."

"Ay, Puff, but you know those French *sans-culottes* are only now recovering from their revolution; little better than savages, they don't know how to treat men of our rank. Indeed the savages have the advantages of them, for when I was at the Longbow Islands I always met with the utmost deference. There both Madderhead and the prince were most assiduous, and you know that Jemminey, the chief master-butcher, gave me at parting even the very knife from his girdle."

"Ah! that was very kind! But didn't he add the *steel* too?"

"Pooh! No, no. But Puff, as I tell you, my father Sir James would say, that—that this Ranolini is a most suspicious fellow. Who can he be? I'm convinced that he's some one. I shouldn't be surprised if he was to turn out one of the French regicides!"

" Ah, very like! I've been thinking so all along. Perhaps he's Robespierre himself!"

" Why, Puff!—Puff! My dear fellow! Robespierre's been dead I don't know how long."

" Ehem—ah—yes—bless me how I forget! to be sure so he has! I remember now reading the affair in the papers, when I was abroad in Ireland.—Some woman stabbed him in the bath."

" Exactly, yes—quite right! Well, Puff, my suspicion is—but mind you mustn't mention this to any one."

" No, I wont!"

" Now, on your honour you mustn't?"

" On my honour."

" Well then, my suspicion is—but now positively Puff you mustn't breathe a syllable of this!"

" I wont."

" Not even in your sleep."

" No."

" Well then my suspicion is—that it's no less a person than Cambaceres the French consul, come over here to invent a new 'infernal machine' to blow up the Government."

" *Do* you indeed! well that's just been my opinion all along."

“The deuce! Why then you’re a cleverer fellow than I took you for. From his manner it can’t be less than a general, Puff, and I think it’s one of the consuls. It isn’t the famous Buoneypartey.”

“No: oh dear, no!”

“No, because you see, Puff, he doesn’t look half fierce enough, nor is it Le Brun, so it must be Cambaceres therefore, besides, to tell you my reason, step aside here with me into this arbour.” However, not to inflict upon my reader the empty nothings of two empty heads, it will suffice to say, that the result of their cogitations was a letter to Mr. Pitt, in which they said that “a most suspicious foreigner had landed at Plymouth.” They then went on to describe him, mentioning their hypothesis of his being Cambaceres, and in short, making such a ludicrous jumble of the affair that no one of any sense could have read it without laughing. Luckily for Rannolini they supported the character of anonymous correspondents throughout, and did not even mention the circumstances of the shipwreck, or how this suspicious foreigner had found his way to England, lest, on an enquiry being instituted, it should come to the ears of the Port Admiral that they

had been the informers ; in which case they knew that he would resent to the utmost such a breach of good faith towards those who were his guests. Mr. Pitt on receiving this precious morceau of prying ignorance, merely laughed at its contents, as he had done at innumerable similar communications, but as one of his many agents happened to be going down into Devonshire, on the day of its receipt—Saturday,—he sent for him, showed him the letter, and desired him, as was his custom, to find out the suspected person, and take his likeness, adding, “ They mention the fact of this stranger’s coming up to town. So be on the alert if you should meet any likely person. By the way, do you know at all to whom these poor people allude ? ”

“ No, sir,” replied the agent, who was a clever artist, “ but you have the miniatures of two or three French spies residing at that port. Perhaps on comparing these with the latter, we may find out the one alluded to.”

“ True—here they are.”

Pitt then advanced to a bureau, on opening which were seen a number of petitions lettered with the alphabet. “ Now, let us see—Plymouth—P—. This is it,” taking out a red morocco case

which unfolded and displayed a number of likenesses—four or five were examined, but without tracing any similarity. “What fools these informants must be! If it be true, I shall suspect them of being accomplices—they neither name his occupation or residence, the time of his arrival, nor the place from whence he came last.—‘*France*,’ they might as well have said *Europe*. But I doubt not, that like many similar wonderful discoveries, it will turn out to be some poor unfortunate emigrant who dreams far less of plots than he does of the restoration. However we must see to it—and now begone; lose no time, and you need spare no expense.”

Obedient to these instructions the messenger set off, and at five o’clock in the afternoon of the second day—Sunday—he stopped to change horses at an inn to which a carriage and four had just driven up for the same purpose. Observing that the horses bore traces of hard riding, and that the utmost despatch was used to yoke in the fresh relay, he inquired in a seemingly careless tone what nobleman was on his way to town.

“None, sir, that we know of,” replied a waiter, “it’s only two strangers, a gentleman and a foreigner

on their road from Devon—Plymouth I think they come from.”

This was enough for the ministerial spy, and walking into one of the front sitting rooms on the first floor, he flung up the window and took a sketch of Rannolini—for it was he—as he sat in the carriage which had been opened at the top, to admit of his viewing the country through which they passed.

The artist, however, had barely time to take down the outline of Rannolini’s features, when Croiser jumped into the carriage, and they both drove off. Fortunately the latter had not been seen at all by this artist, and the foreigner but so slightly that no very correct portrait could be taken. Having filled up this imperfect sketch to the best of his recollection, he inclosed it in a letter to his employer, Mr. Pitt. The spot at which this occurred was a mere tavern with one or two hovels, and without a post-office; he was therefore obliged to leave the letter in the hands of the host, to be forwarded to its destination by the first mail.

Pursuing the various convolutions of my story, we must now return to Croiser, who on reaching

the residence of Mr. Pitt, was immediately admitted to his presence. He found the minister, much to his secret satisfaction, so deeply engaged with the multiplicity of affairs which demanded his attention, that he could scarcely afford a moment's hearing to any thing which his young friend might have to say.

His first questions were, "Well, Captain Croiser, have you any thing of importance to tell me? Where is Napoleon? What is he about? What is the state of public opinion in France? Is it true, think you, that he is actually about to attempt the invasion? or are the reports correct which destine the army of Boulogne for a German campaign?"

"I can scarcely answer that question, I assure you, sir," replied Croiser, "no one seems to know! Many of the officers about Napoleon's person, supposed to be in his confidence, assert that the invasion of England is a mere blind, a project never seriously contemplated. Bourrienne, his late secretary, is among those who affirm this. On the contrary, the Parisians generally seem to think, that the moment has arrived for the attempted subjection of England. For me, I confess, I can say nothing on the subject. Napoleon gives out one thing to one party, and

another to another. I believe that the truth is strictly confined within his own mind, and that time and events alone will disclose it."

"I begin to think that you are right. Somehow I have an idea, though I can give no distinct reason for it, that the first consul is waiting for some favourable moment, some smile, I suppose, from his goddess of Fortune. But Bourrienne, I should think that we might rely on what he says! *He* must know—his old school-fellow must know his mind."

"That's true, sir; but if Bourrienne is crafty, he is overmatched by the colossal genius of General Buonaparte. The latter seems to be pretty well aware that his late secretary is on rather too intimate terms with this side of the Channel. Indeed, I believe the fear of this to weigh with the consul in not taking him back, far more than any representations of Bourrienne's enemies. This it is which makes him keep on good terms with the ex-secretary, in order that he may possess an unsuspected channel through which to mystify you!"

"That's like Buonaparte's policy to be sure! But I hardly know! Have you any papers for me? I am so pressed for time that I can say no

more at present. However, I shall have something for France in a day or two; call on me shortly. I suppose you still continue to elude the French cruisers?"

"Oh yes! easily enough. Fouché has provided me with a passport for them. By the by, sir, you must give me some little piece of information for him. These papers will inform you of some of Napoleon's movements. And now I will trespass on your time no further."

"Very good! Then I shall see you in a day or two. Are you in funds, by the bye? Truly I had forgotten! Here are some notes!"

"Thank you, sir," said Croiser, bending low, while the colour mantled to his cheek as he put the money into his pocket.

"Be in readiness, Croiser, and now good morning." Croiser moved to depart. "But stay—stay. Is it actually true that the Consul is about to establish the imperial throne and assume its dignities so soon?"

"I fear it is, sir!"

The minister's brow darkened as he faced about to the window, with his hands crossed behind his tall ungainly figure. Turning quickly round, and mutely waving the packet which he held towards

Croiser, he touched the bell. Croiser bowed profoundly and left the room, while he heard the minister make some indistinct remark from which he could only gather the words, "*an emperor!!*" The fortune that is his goddess, must indeed be my evil genius!"

Croiser was no sooner seated in his carriage, whirling off on his return to Rannolini, than he took from his pocket the paper which Pitt had given him, and looking to its amount—five hundred pounds—he muttered, "His generosity is certainly a redeeming trait!—if we can so term the profusion which squanders the bounty of a nation without scruple as to the mode of obtaining it, or heedless as to the results of its expenditure. Even in private life that feeling cannot be ennobled by the term of generosity, which merely dispenses to others the superfluity for which it has no need; for that man alone is generous, who wanting himself can yet share his means with those who want still more. Measured then by such a metre, even Pitt falls short! Thus perish the vile lucre which tyranny makes subservient to the viler uses of corruption! Since such are his weapons, he shall be foiled with arms of his own forging!" Tearing the notes into pieces, Croiser flung them

to the bottom of his carriage and trod them into the fur beneath his feet.

The door opened, he had reached the house of * once more, and now ascended to Rannolini. Rannolini rose on the instant, and taking leave of the statesman for the present, sent his carriage back to their hotel, and putting his arm through that of Croiser, desired him to take the nearest route to the Horse Guards.

“ I hope,” said Croiser, “ that you have been pleased with your visit.”

“ Oh, admirably ! I could scarcely have believed that a man of so much genius as * could be so easily cajoled. He has not the most distant idea of the purport of my visit ! He believes that it is a sort of silly romantic adventure for my own amusement. It was not my cue, you know, Croiser, to undeceive him. I came into his views, talked of the pleasurable excitement of the risk attendant on a voyage to Britain, of the impassable vigilance of the British cruisers, the constant gales which protect your shores ; recalled to his remembrance the Spanish armada ; played off to him the futility of further conquests for France ; pretended to view my long-cherished project as perfectly at an end, and seemed with great unwillingness to

abandon it for ever. Believe me, I cajoled him most completely! He little knows me, if he thinks I would endanger every thing for *amusement* alone! It is true that this may have tempted me some way, but there is no one to whom I could trust for the information I want. Andreossi, on his return to Paris after the embassy, could tell me very little. Apropos—I go down to the Nore to-morrow with you. We must inspect the fortifications at Chatham very narrowly, and we can then push on to Sheerness. I mentioned the intended inspection to *, but he seemed to offer no objection to it. By the by, he appears to be most anxious that this visit should be kept in eternal silence and secrecy. He extorted from me a promise to that effect. He is prudent, but when once the day is our own, he will have nothing to fear. It amuses me, does his simplicity, in not suspecting my views. I am to hear him speak to-night—Oh, but that you know—and Pitt, have you seen *him*? How did you arrange with him? Is every thing right in that quarter?”

“Perfectly so,” replied Croiser, “Luckily he was so deeply engaged that he only had time to say a few words. He asked the usual questions, wanted to know where Napoleon was, to which I

answered, 'I cannot exactly tell you.' He seems perfectly puzzled about the invasion, but rather inclined to think that it is not meant in earnest. You may be sure that *I* did not elucidate the matter much, though I told him a sufficiency of unimportant truths to make him confident of my attachment to his interests. He seems thunder-struck at the idea of the new Imperial dynasty"—

"*Aha!* does he—that's *good!!* From whom, think you, did he get his information respecting the invasion?"

"I rather think it came through Monsieur De Bourrienne."

"Bourrienne! Did he?—I have been informed of this before! That is another viper that I have warmed in my bosom until he would sting me if he could; but I know him, there are a nest of such. I shall have my eye upon them, they shall be crushed!"

"As to that, I think I have poisoned *that* source of information in Pitt's mind, by telling him confidentially, that you suspected Bourrienne, and pretended to notice him still, in order that you might mystify the English ministry through the channel of his communications."—

"Admirable, my Croiser. The pear is ripening. We shall yet see the day when our bulletins are

dated 'London' instead of 'Paris.' But where are these horse guards?"

"Yonder they stand, do you not see their chargers' necks projecting!—Before us, where those groupes of ragged little urchins are looking up in wonder at the trappings of slavery."

"Come, come, my friend, no abuse of the army, —the navy as much as you please."

"I beg pardon," said Croiser smiling, "truly I had forgotten. Now we turn," and they stood in the front court of the Horse Guards.

After surveying the building for a few moments Rannolini expressed his disappointment. "Tut! this is a mere guard-house after all! And are these the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief of the army?"

"Stay, you have the worst view before you, we will pass through and look at it from the Park."

"Ah, this is not so bad!" when they reached the other side. "What building is that on the right?"

"The Treasury."

"And on the left?"

"The Admiralty."

"Ah, the Admiralty! That is the only thing in England which I envy. In all the rest we may

rival if not surpass her ; but there"—He did not finish the sentence, but after gazing at the building for a few moments, he turned, and folding his arms walked mutely forward with Croiser at his side, until they reached St. James's. The dingy exterior of this edifice excited his mirth. " Truly my Croiser !" he remarked jestingly, " we must build you a somewhat better palace than this when you are our ally."

" Apropos, we have passed Carlton House."

CHAPTER VI.

“ Conqueror of the world art thou,
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne’er more brunted in men’s minds than now.
* * Thou seek’st to assume th’ imperial mien,
And shake the world again, the thund’rer of the scene.”

CHILDE HAROLD.

Not, however, to weary the reader, it will suffice to say that our two friends having passed an hour or two in remarking all that seemed most worthy of notice in the west end, the hour of four arrived. “ Come,” said Rannolini, “ the business of the House begins shortly, I wish to be there early, in order to witness their mode of conducting it. We must dine.”

“ True,” replied Croiser, “ we will return instantly to our hotel, though I am sorry to say that I have neglected to order dinner.”

“ That’s of no consequence, I shall not dine in Albemarle Street. Take me to some restaurant such as that one which I pointed out to you in the

Rue St. Honoré, near the Palais Royal, where I used to dine with that ingrate Bourrienne. It appears to me but yesterday, that I met him there on the twentieth of June, when I was a sub-lieutenant of artillery. Those were miserable, yet happy days! Strange! that even sorrow is a source of pleasure to memory!—But, bah! we lose time; you know the sort of place I mean, where officers of the army and navy dine. I like to hear the topics they discuss. It is a very good key to public opinion. It is a favourite amusement of mine, when I am idle of an evening at Paris. Here as well as there, I shall hear something of myself I dare say. I have often thought of the joke of going to such a place in London, and listening to all the names which you John Bulls please to bestow on me.”

“Why, I fear that you may hear something unpleasant.”

“Oh, for that I can allow!”

Seeing that he was bent on this project, Croiser took him to the only place with which he was acquainted, and where he knew that several officers of the two services dined, in the neighbourhood of the Haymarket. On their road Rannolini remarked

to Croiser, "How frequently is a noble city spoiled in its appearance by the want of regularity in the buildings. See, look around us, what confusion and inconsistency in the various structures. This is one of the greatest faults in Paris. And this reminds me of a project I have often entertained of appointing government surveyors and architects to draw the plans of all houses built in towns and cities throughout France. They shall pay a small sum for the advantage thus enjoyed, and be compelled to attend to uniformity of design. They shall also be obliged to use materials of a proper strength and solidity. This will prevent accidents, houses falling, and so on. It would be no tax, but a blessing. What a splendid city this would have been had such a law been in operation for the last fifty years!"

They had now arrived at the singular auberge at which Rannolini was intent on dining, and having entered, Croiser called for the bill of fare while his friend reconnoitred the room and the guests it contained. It was a low dark room filled with guests at various tables, and the conversation was mingled with sundry technicalities of either service. Suddenly the cheerful gaiety on Rannolini's

countenance gave way to a stern expression, as he watched some individual at the next table with much doubt and apprehension.

“ I suppose you saw him this morning, sir——?”

“ ’Tis the same,” said Rannolini, in a low voice, on hearing the name by which the object of his suspicions was addressed, though he did not understand the question. Rising on the instant with some precipitation, he touched Croiser warily on the shoulder and then left the room, while the latter in astonishment and alarm quickly followed him. On gaining the street, the foreigner walked forward with some rapidity and in silence, turning at random first one corner and then another.

“ Croiser,” said he in a few minutes, when he deemed himself in some manner clear of pursuit, “ *who* think you was sitting near us?”

“ Who in the name of Fortune? I confess myself at a loss to conceive!”

“ Why truly you would hardly guess! What think you of Admiral Sir ——?”

“ Is it possible? How singular!”

“ Strange enough, but still a fact. The madman!—a silly man, but a brave officer. Of all men he has crossed my path, if not the most, at least at the most annoying moment!”

“Well, it is strange! one would hardly have expected to have met a man of his rank in such a spot! But he is very poor! Then where will you go now, Monsieur? I hardly know of any other similar restaurateur’s.”

“Oh, no more of them! I have had enough of the adventure—to our hotel straight! Let us get a hasty dinner, and be off to the House!”

Agreeably to these directions, they dined in their rooms in Albemarle-street, and then drove down to Westminster. Having gone through the forms necessary for their admission, they entered, and found Mr. Pitt on his legs. Rannolini took up a retired spot, and listened attentively for some part of an unusually long speech, in which he was immediately followed by *. Croiser attempted to translate the pith of what was said to his friend, but the utterance of the latter speaker was so rapid, that it left him far behind, and he was obliged to give it up in despair.

“I am disappointed in Pitt’s person,” said Rannolini; “it is insignificant notwithstanding its height, and his features are inexpressive, when we consider his intellect. For after all, his

is a great mind!—indefatigable in following up the suggestions of a genius which is of itself indomitable. I must say I admire, even though I detest him! He has a good idea of ruling. He has the advantage of * in delivery, if the latter is superior in matter, which I think that he is. But the mind of * is formed altogether on a grander scale! it is nobler, more liberal; he is not the bigot which Pitt is.” At this moment some one passed by them, and coming in gentle contact with Rannolini, the foreigner turned round.

The stranger was a gentleman in the noon of manhood, of prepossessing appearance, and bearing all the external marks of high-breeding. He took up a position immediately by Rannolini’s side, and seemed to enter very warmly into the sentiments expressed by *.

“Who is that, Croiser?” The captain looked at the new comer for a few seconds, and then whispered in the ear of the foreigner, “You are in luck to-night! It is no less a person than the Prince of Wales!”

“Ha! that is admirable! I must speak to him.”

“For Heaven’s sake, have a care!”

“Never fear me.” Then slightly pressing—as if by accident—the foot of the illustrious individual in question, so as to attract his attention, the foreigner begged his pardon with all the ease and breeding that he could so readily assume, and soon entered into conversation with him for the better part of an hour.

Having waited for the adjournment, * came up and shook Rannolini by the hand; and after the latter had complimented him on the brilliant speech which he had made, insisted that they should accompany him home to supper, which they did.

“Well, Croiser,” said Rannolini, as they drove home, “after all, these speeches may be very fine, and it does well enough to amuse the canaille, this sort of chatter about nothing, but still in the end you must confess that they are mere babblers—nothing more! I would not be plagued with such a set in Paris for all the world.” To this remark Croiser made no reply, preferring, when he differed in opinion from his friend, as at present, not to enter into an argument, as uncalled for as it would have been useless.

Early on the next morning they were on their road to Chatham. The day was one of those

cloudless and delicious specimens of an English summer which are so truly delightful. Rannolini was in high spirits. "This Kent is a complete garden," he observed, as plantation after plantation appeared, in which the hops were in full bloom. "It would *almost* be a pity to trample so much cultivation beneath the rude hoofs of a body of cavalry. What a splendid road too is this! It is one continued level. See, plain after plain presents itself! Such a country as this is only tenable by a superior force. It is as I have always said, Croiser; an army once landed would be possessed of London in five days! What stand could be made against us in such a champaign country as this?" but finding that Croiser was silent, he fell back into a deep but pleasant reverie, as the smile around his mouth denoted.

Having arrived at Chatham, somewhere near the hour of three o'clock, they immediately took horse and rode over the lines. These elicited a smile of contempt from Rannolini, who remarked, "If the works on which they are now so busy do not far excel those they supersede, it will be but a brief time that we are delayed here, my Croiser, on our march to town!"

Having admired the country about Rochester,

and shrugged his shoulders at the misery of the town itself, they retired to rest after the fatigues of the day.

By an early hour on the next morning they again arose, and set off by water for Sheerness.

As they passed down the innumerable, tedious, and devious windings of the Medway, Rannolini mutely but anxiously surveyed the ships of war at anchor, in all the various stages of lying in ordinary (or store), ready for sea, fitting, and refitting.

On landing at Sheerness, there was at that time nothing to demand his attention, save the trifling fort which commanded the entrance of the harbour. After quickly walking over this little battery, Rannolini returned to one of the bastions which overhung the sea.

From the moment they had set out from Chatham in the morning, up to the present time, Rannolini had scarcely spoken a word, and Croiser seeing from the stern expression of thought on his countenance, that he was not in a very communicative mood, had forborne to intrude on him with any remarks. Suddenly pointing to the Nore, whose dreary and muddy expanse lay stretched before him, he remarked, as they walked up and down, "I once thought that *this* would prove the best

spot for invasion. I now see my error. It is true, Croiser, that this is a point perfectly open and unguarded, but my mind is made up. This is not the favourable place of attack which I had once considered it. The shallows and difficult navigation would occasion far too great a loss of time. It is too far distant also from the encampment, where the embarkation must take place. To think of taking troops up that meandering puddle, the Medway, would be madness, and I suspect the route on its marshy banks to be little preferable. To be sure it is only a long day's march from London, and there are no fortifications on the road worth mentioning, but those advantages are overbalanced by the attendant evils. For here they might bring into operation their best means of strength, by hastily manning those ships which we passed, they might render the march to Chatham most destructive, if not impracticable. No, I now see my path distinct before me. Dover shall witness my arrival. My plan is determined on, and this is it, Croiser," laying his hand familiarly on his young friend's shoulder, while his eyes sparkled with animation: "we will return immediately to France; my flotilla is in readiness. It shall be completed on the instant

to four thousand vessels. At this very time I have two hundred thousand picked troops encamped on the heights of Boulogne. I will take immediate measures so as to be supported by twice, or, if need be, thrice that number. They have already been practised in embarking and disembarking, and they shall yet be wound up to the utmost pitch of enthusiasm. A hundred thousand of them shall be made to embark and land daily, as part of their drill. There are squadrons now lying in the ports of Rochefort and Boulogne. I will instantly despatch these to sea, so as to decoy the English from the Channel; they shall have some place of appointment named, where they shall receive fresh instructions to return without loss of time to the Channel; calling at Brest for a reinforcement, as well as previously shortening sail off the Ferrol to be joined by the Spanish fleet. Then by another manœuvre which I have in my mind's eye, and false intelligence adroitly managed, the English shall be so far led off from the right scent as to leave the Channel clear for six weeks, during which time I shall have thus contrived to assemble some eighty ships of the line, and having command of the seas in that spot, not a moment

shall be lost in embarking twenty men and one horse in each of the boats of the flotilla, and pushing across to Dover with these eighty thousand troops, while the cockneys are in all the glorious anticipation of some great naval victory in the West Indies. These eighty thousand men then, finding nothing to offer any adequate resistance, take possession of the town and the surrounding heights, and push their videttes forward on the road to London, while the flotilla returning without the delay of an hour to Boulogne, would re-embark the remaining eighty thousand, making in the whole a hundred and sixty, and accomplishing their landing within twenty-four hours. Before any steps can be taken to bring an efficient force against us, we shall be half way on our road to the metropolis. Both parties rush on—we meet; their troops must be few, and those but inexperienced recruits. These cannot stand the veterans reared in the campaigns of Italy, inured to fatigue on the banks of the Nile, and the burning sands of the desert, and proved on the bloody plains of Marengo! Superior discipline, knowledge, and numbers, must win the day!

“The first pitched battle then is ours; we sustain little loss, and pursue the route to the

very towers of Julius. Within thirty-six hours London is in our hands! R——y has its last fall in England, a republic is proclaimed, and the aristocracy is at an end^a. I shall assemble the popular leaders; they shall choose a constitution of their own and authorities to preside.—You, my Croiser, enjoying one of the chief posts, and trusting to your friend the conqueror and your own abilities, for ultimately obtaining the first. Then shall Britain at last obtain a deliverance from the oppressive system which now fetters her strength! Once free, all her energies, all her vast resources shall be employed in uniting with France, to spread these glorious principles throughout the world! Then her sway over

^a As I am well aware that these pages may meet the eyes of many whose “most sweet voices” will be raised vehemently (and welcome for me) against the matter contained herein; and as I am also aware that it would be futile to expect from these good people the justice of reading a work to the end, before passing an opinion on its merits, I shall here remind the reader that the sentiments of Rannolini are neither mine, nor shared by me; but his alone, as that mighty but somewhat visionary spirit expressed them. His wonderful and gigantic plans remain to us, to excite our wonder, and to be remembered with the scarcely less stupendous deeds which he executed; but his warmest and most partial admirers, of which I confess myself one, must ever rejoice that he failed in his designs on Britain, more especially, since we have found sufficient virtue to purify the abuses of our constitution, unaided by the arms of a foreign invader.

the ocean will be turned to the happy and beneficent purpose from which it has too long been perverted. Then it will at length protect the commerce of the united empires, and bestow on them a greatness unknown, or even undreamed of before. Then, Croiser, then, our knowledge of the East will be turned to advantage. For it is from the East that all true greatness must spring, and ever has sprung. France, the close ally of England, we must make the empire of India subservient to the dearest interests of the two countries! The first, the greatest boon which could be granted to Englishmen, would be a repeal of taxes. I would effect this, and at the earliest moment. I would have them told so. Nay more; I would prove that it was in our power. The cessation of the war with France, the change of government, and consequent abolition of unnecessary pageant, would do much towards the reduction of expenditure. We would complete it. The interest of England's debt would alone remain; and that by the upsetting of the present order of things, would be considerably diminished. It should however no longer press upon Englishmen—it should be paid from other sources: from the confiscated estates of

such as decided against us, and the rest defrayed by the possession of India."

"'India'! Then things must vastly alter; for as yet India yields no promise of ——"

"Wait. Remember in whose hands are its resources! To the genius of whom is its government confided? To that of a set of imbeciles—fools and knaves—a herd of mercenary contractors and jobbers, striving to enrich themselves and cajole the nation at the expense of the native princes! Men who possess no one idea more ennobling than the barter of so many cases of indigo and chests of tea. I know them—know them full well. What people in their senses would confide one of the noblest—without doubt the richest empire in the globe, to some score of obscure and noteless jobbers? None of that! I know its resources better. The soil of India is adequate to the production of any growth—of every growth! She could supply the countries of the globe. For a hundred years to come she would present a land of almost enchantment and good fortune to the *élite* in talent of France and England, requiring but perseverance and ability to requite them with all the luxuries of life! That clime is now a sealed fountain of wealth, which,

once opened, would almost overflow! It should be for us then to accomplish this opening, and that under salutary restrictions to the whole world! What vast districts in India are now depopulated! What still larger districts are entirely uninhabited. Yet the population of India might be increased to any extent! Her sepoys can be trained under European officers to become some of the finest troops on earth. On their native soil what northerns could cope with them? They would undergo toils which none others could survive! Who knows?—Persia might fall beneath her arms! Again—her timber—the Teak tree will produce ships which ours cannot rival. The Parsees with their slow but astonishing industry, cannot be surpassed in such mechanism. India would soon float a navy, in many respects fit to cope with that of England!”

“Yes, Monsieur, this is all true, and I grant that it would be a gigantic power in the hands of a master-spirit, but remember that before we can render the commerce of India available to the desired end, there are innumerable minor difficulties to be subdued, but which you have overlooked in the theory of so vast a plan!”

“I have not forgotten them, but I set forward with

this: to genius, determination, and prudence every thing must yield. I have proved it, for I have surmounted difficulties far greater than any which we should have to encounter!—Listen!” and here Rannolini paused in his walk. His eye, without losing its severe look, assumed an expression of pleasure, mingled with pride, while an unusual curl of bitter irony gathered around his mouth.

“Twelve years have not passed since I stood in the streets of Paris, a youth, a stranger, a son of fortune, with no one on whom to rely for sustenance except myself! I was an unemployed sub-lieutenant of artillery, say of a good but decayed family. These were all the advantages I could boast in life!—My only possessions in the wide world! I had not even money to buy a dinner!—For this I was but too frequently indebted to an old schoolfellow. Day after day it was my lot to dance attendance at the War office, soliciting even the most hazardous employments, eager to catch at any thing. I had not even a friend to assist me. These things looked desperate, but I knew myself too well to doubt. I confided in my own genius! I was right, for behold, those adverse circumstances have never for an instant retarded my career! They did not prevent me from

becoming in the space of eight short years, the head of one of the first kingdoms of Europe ; the ruler of thirty millions of people. These circumstances, Croiser, did not prevent me from revenging Gaul upon the empire of her ancient victor, Julius, by standing undisputed conqueror on the fertile soil of Italy ! Nor did they prevent me from shaking to its base the throne of the last of the Cæsars, nor from heading the immortal men who resubdued the land of the Ptolemies, while yet shadowed by their very pyramids ; or from rescuing my adored country from the hands of imbeciles, and giving her a due rank among the nations of the earth ! Neither, my Croiser, did they prevent me from obtaining that which cannot be the least dear to me—a page in the imperishable records of history, and a recollection among the posterity of mankind ! Remembering this—looking back on this,” and he resumed his rapid pace while his features seemed to glow with the bright beam of intelligence which played over them,—“ Can I pause ?—Can I doubt ? Never. We must proceed. We must not cease to advance. To pause, is to be lost. That which I have gained is not half, scarcely the half of half which remains to be

obtained. It is not sufficient to have the recollection of mankind, their admiration also must be mine ! Mankind tolerate the greatness of an individual at best but with jealousy, but in mine, self-interest shall lead them to rejoice. If I am great, it shall be for their good. No, Croiser, I see my difficulties, but my means are more than adequate. England once ours and, as I said to you before, the commerce of the world would be at our disposal. If individuals, by their paltry petty bartering, can amass immense wealth, surely when the energies and resources of three mighty nations, England, France, and India, are concentrated and applied to the same end, surely we might realize a gain of a hundred millions a-year ! Your debt we will suppose to be six hundred millions, forty millions then would amply pay its interest, and the remaining sixty by being applied to the liquidation of the capital, would in some eight years relieve you from its burden altogether ! But it is because men will not apply their souls to any given task that they fail in its execution. It is because these things get into the hands of jobbers, who ruin a nation to enrich themselves ! These projects when first mentioned, may seem chimeri-

cal. Not so, however, to me; I can rely on my own resources, on my own invention,—that which has stood me good stead in many undertakings scarcely less momentous. But to those who have never been thus tried, the Alps appear insurmountable, and the Red Sea impassable! Whatever may be the task which is to be undertaken, let him who would triumph, but once apply his *soul* to the accomplishment of the end in view, and already the greater number of his difficulties are vanquished. I do not take to myself all the credit for whatever I may have accomplished. No, I am aware how much Fortune has favoured me, but I do not fear that she will desert me yet! But of these things hereafter, for the present my plan is as clear before me as though it were traced upon a chart. We have seen all that is necessary, let us get back to Chatham. I am impatient of every moment that delays my return to France, and the preparations for our descent!" And Rannolini gradually relapsing from his former state of excitement into his usual manner, left the rampart which they had been pacing together during this singular conversation, and walking quickly towards the boat which waited for them, they returned up the Medway; while Croiser mutely reflected on the

schemes lately proposed to him, and felt his admiration at the wonderful mind of his companion increased in proportion.

Leaving our hero once more for a short period, we must return, gentle reader, to other actors in our little drama.

CHAPTER VII.

“ He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurled,
A thing of dark imaginings, which shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped,
But 'scaped in vain.”

BYRON.

AT the period to which we now refer, so many jarring interests were opposed to one another, and so great was the struggle for pre-eminence, that many paths of conduct were then held available, which would now be looked on with suspicion at least, if not disgust. In the neighbourhood of a court where a certain degree of polish is expected from every one, and the surface of the stream is always supposed to be serene, however fiercely opposing eddies may be struggling beneath, the undisguised force which bears away the palm in other contests, must necessarily give way to intrigue and circumvention. Among

numerous other means towards accomplishing the same ends, was a universal system of espionage chiefly patronised and introduced by the chief minister of the crown, and subsequently adopted by his foes in self-defence.

As there were few persons of any consequence among his opponents, over whom this celebrated statesman's scrutiny did not extend, so in return there were many to whom it was of the first importance to be informed of his proceedings. Among these was **, and he had succeeded in attaching to his interest, one who was not only in the interests of the minister, but had far greater opportunities of knowing the affairs of his master, than the latter would by any means have permitted, had he been aware of the fact.

It was on Thursday morning, the day after the departure of Croiser with his foreign friend for Chatham, that this individual waited on **, to apprise him that the minister had, on the preceding day, received several letters, informing him of the arrival of two spies at Plymouth from France, and of their subsequent departure for London. He also acquainted ** with the fact that they had been traced by the agents of the minister to the house of **, and thence to their departure for Dover, to

which port orders had been sent to intercept and arrest them, for some alleged offence against the laws.

The alarm that such intelligence was calculated to excite, may be readily imagined. One source of consolation was however to be gathered from this disastrous news, namely, that the minister was still without the slightest idea that one of the suspected couple was his trusted and confidential friend Croiser. While **, in the greatest perplexity, was revolving in his own mind the best method of getting Rannolini out of the country, and bestowing some few objurgations on the imprudent curiosity which he believed to have brought him over, as well as the improvident carelessness which had omitted to leave with him their present address, an individual was announced for audience with whom, to the best of his belief, he had not the most remote acquaintance. Leave being given for his admission, the door opened, and the servant ushered in a stranger, of no pigmy stature, since in entering he was obliged to stoop for fear of striking his head against the frame of the doorway.

The visitor was arrayed in a coarse jacket and canvas trowsers, which, while they bespoke his

nautical calling, did not seem a warranty of any very high rank. The statesman mutely wondering as to the circumstances which could have obtained for him so unexpected an honour, courteously pointed to a chair, but his Patagonian visitor making an awkward bow, accompanied by a scrape of the foot, seemed to decline this accommodation. Putting his hand up to his forehead, and respectfully pulling one of the locks which already began to grow very thinly over his temples, he said, "I beg your honour's pardon, but my name's Tim Tarpaulin: I've come up by orders o' my skip—that is—begging his pardon—my captain—Captain Croiser. May-be, sir, you may know his honour, and if that's the case, why ye may take Tim's word for it, that ye know as good an officer and as smart a seaman, as ever took a prize or hauled out a weather earing!"

"Ah, my good fellow, is it you?" replied **, recognizing the name, and calling to mind that Croiser was anxious about his faithful servant, who came to Mr. **'s house by his direction. "I'm very glad to see you safe in town; your captain mentioned to me your expected arrival from Dover."

"Ay, ay, your honour, just so."

“ But he was fearful lest you should not be able to reach town. I believe sailors are not proverbial for making land journeys, whatever you may do in the way of sea voyages. But sit down my good fellow, sit down, and tell me how you managed to get to town; I don’t like to see you standing after so much fatigue.”

“ Thank your honour, thankye!” said Tim, availing himself of the proffered seat, “ as to the fiteeg, sir, I must say that I’d rather keep watch and watch, beating through the Straits of Gibraltar on a rainy night, than start off on one of these land voyages again; more specially when it’s aboard o’ such pia-waw-waw picked-up-along-shore-hau-buck as the barkey I came in!”

“ *What?*” said **, smiling at the original, and to him most novel, character, which he had thus suddenly encountered, and which he quickly determined to draw out for his amusement. “ Barkey, what do you mean, Mr. Tim?”

“ My name, and begging your honour’s pardon, isn’t *Mister* Tim,” said Tarpaulin suddenly interrupting the statesman, for he hated such an appellation, “ ’tis but Tim Tarpaulin, much at your honour’s service, though if your honour’s in a hurry, and wants mayhap to say something short,

why d'ye see I answers to Nine-fathom Timothy, seeing that I was once cast away"—but the reader already knows the tale, at which ** indulged in a long and hearty laugh, saying,

"Well then, Nine-fathom-Timothy, you have little to fear from drowning in future, that is one consolation for you; but as I should think that you must be very hungry, I'll order some refreshment for you," ringing the bell. "When did you arrive in London?"

"This morning, your honour, about gun-fire."

"Gun-fire?"

"Ay, your honour, the daylight gun, thof to be sure I didn't hear it!"

"Oh! I understand, you mean at daybreak—you came by the mail I suppose?"

"Mail, sir? Divil a mail in the matter! for bad luck to it, I was too late your honour. Your honour 'ill see that I only brought to in Dover Bay, about five minutes to eight bells in the last dog watch."

"And what o'clock may that be?"

"Eight o'clock your honour, so that ye see by the time I'd got the bark moored, her yards squared and a boat hoisted out to get ashore in, it was one bell in the first watch. I didn't get ashore till nigh two bells—you call it nine o'clock, your

honour—and then I found myself hard and fast; for the passage-boat, or mail as your honour calls it, had started just an hour before.”

“Why then, how did you manage to get up to town?”

“Your honour shall hear all about it. Ye see, sir, as soon as I found that the mail was off, I was in a pretty taking surely, thof to be sure I don’t see how I could have helped it; however, sir, while I was standing at the inn-door, chafing and swearing like a cat in a line, some of the ostlers came up to me in a consoling sort of a manner, trying to comfort me. ‘Jack,’ says they, ‘dont take it to heart so much; if it’s anything particular that you want to be up in town about, why we’ve got a capital horse here, ye shall have cheap; it’s a true bit of blood.’ ‘Horse, old boy, true bit of blood,’ said I, ‘why I know as much about backing a horse as a horse knows about steering a boat!’ ‘What o’ that, Jack?’ said they. ‘My name’s not Jack,’ said I, ‘don’t be coming it so strong over a fellow! My name’s Tim.’ ‘Well then, Tim,’ said they, no-ways put out, ‘this is the best horse that you ever sat eyes on, you’ve no more to do than get astride him, and go to sleep, for he knows the way

to London, every inch of it, as well as a blind man does to his mouth, and as to ride—he rides as easy as a good sea-boat in a gale o’ wind.”

“Well, certainly, Tim, that was some temptation, you were monstrously lucky to chance on such a horse.”

“Why, as to that, your honour, it *was* a great temptation; but as to the luck, your honour shall hear more about that. However, ye see, sir, they didn’t spare soft words. ‘Moreover,’ said they, ‘the animal’s dirt cheap, and he goes like a clipper free o’ the wind.’ ‘When shall I make my port, think ye, mate?’ said I. ‘Why, Tim,’ said they, ‘to-morrow morning early, wind and weather holding fair.’ ‘Well,’ said I, ‘I don’t expect impossibilities, so bring the craft out, and if I like her build, why, ye see, I’m the fellow that’ll strike a bargain with ye.’ ‘Well then, Tim,’ — always ‘Tim,’ ye see, sir, — ‘Well then, Tim,’ says they, ‘walk this way;’ and they took me first to starboard, and then to port, as if they were trying to work something like Tom Coxe’s traverse.”

“And what may that be?” interrupted **, entering into the character of the rough and honest sailor, with all the pleasure which novelty excites.

“What is it, your honour?” replied Tim, “why it’s up one ladder and down the next; howsoever, at last we came to a sort o’ shed at the break o’ the town, the end nighest to the London road, and sure enough they walked the craft out, and brought a lantern for me to hold a survey on it, chattering all the time about its being a prime bargain and a true bit o’ blood. ‘As to your bit o’ blood, ye lubbers,’ says I, ‘I don’t think he’ll go any the better for that.’ ‘Oh yes, she will, though Tim!’ said they. ‘Well then, poor creatur!’ said I, ‘it’s as plain as a pike-staff, for there’s the blood ye talk of on her knees—isn’t that what ye mean?’ ‘Oh yes, Tim, that’s it.’ ‘Well then, what’s the price?’ says I. ‘Fifty guineas!’ Well, your honour, I pulled out my shot-case, and down with the dust, made them rig the creatur out a little, and point out the right course for London; then taking some slight bearings, your honour, I jumped a-board o’ my barky, and made all sail, ten knots an hour, holding well on by the slack, for fear o’ coming down by the run; and your honour must know it’s no easy matter to hold your own on such a fly-away. However, your honour, she did pretty well at

first, 'sept that she pitched pretty heavily; but after we'd gone over some ten or fifteen miles, thinks I to myself, your last skipper must a boen a methody parson, or else you wouldn't have larned such a trick of bobbing down on your knees every half-glass—skulking your duty under pretence o' saying your prayers. If this is what ye call 'a bit o' blood,' why no more of it for Tim Tarpaulin! At first I thought my neck would be carried away at the least of it; but as ye see, your honour, that my legs grounded on the bottom, whenever she came on her knee-timbers, why I wasn't so much the worse for it. After a time, your honour, she began to flag; thinks I, what's good for the skipper is good for the crew, so I took out Sal Moffat."

"Who?" said **, utterly unable to comprehend this last allusion, though he had passed over many others in Tarpaulin's narrative almost equally unintelligible, for fear of a repetition of those digressions of which he had already experienced a sample.

"Sal Moffat, your honour, she's my bosom friend, as ye may say, I never go any where without her, and here she is: will your honour condescend to take a drop? I'll warrant it true schnapps,

seeing I smuggled it myself, and begging your honour's pardon—"

"None, oh! none, thank you my good fellow," replied **, to the generous offer of Nine-fathom-Tim, who had already unscrewed the top of his favourite *poculum*, as Lady Sapphira would have termed it, and proffered it full of spirit to his host.

"What, refuse a glass of true schnapps, your honour? Well then, it's a sin it should be wasted, so your honour 'll excuse me if I drink your honour's very good health!" tossing off the potation.

"This canteen," continued Tim, "your honour must know, is called Sal Moffat, because—" but we will spare the reader the repetition of the old story, and take up the conversation which followed.

"What, then!" said **, when the story of Sal Moffat was finished, "did you venture to give your horse raw spirits?"

"Just so, sir, and the creature took it as natural out of the crown of my hat as if she'd been a Christian bred and born; but however, I'd hardly got athwart hawse again, when away she went like a mad animal, and the more I tried to shorten

sail and round her to, the more she carried on. Well, your honour, I managed to hold my own, but that was all, till she shortened sail of her own accord at a little sort o' a tavern. I hadn't been off my craft, however, ten minutes, while they gave her a feed of corn, when the landlord, looking as mighty as a turkey-cock, came to tell me that my bit o' blood was stolen from a gemman's stables, nigh handy, and that twenty pounds were offered to apprehend the thief; and that wasn't the worst, for he told me that he thought your humble servant was the horse-stealer, and that he must detain me, putting himself in the doorway.—'Ye spalpeen o' the ould 'un,' said I, shaking my fist at him, 'my name's Nine-fathom-Tim, and if ye go to call me a horse stealer, I'll think no more of pitching ye out o' your own window than I would think of heaving the dipsy (deep-sea) lead,' then looking round the room and seeing there was no one 'sept ourselves, 'as to the horse,' said I, 'I see now that I've been done brown,' and here I told him the story, your honour; 'but as to the reward say no more about that, we won't fall out for the matter o' twenty pounds, and if you can find out some craft for me to get to the end o' my cruise on, why you may keep the poor creetur be-

low;' for your honour will see she was nigh knocked up, 'and I'll give ye the twenty pounds into the bargain.' When the matter was settled, says he, 'the coach is coming up to the door in a few minutes to change horses, and if ye jump on top of that, ye'll be in London by day-light.' 'That's all right, Bo,' said I, and when she drives up, here's your money, and mind me old fellow, if I catch you saying anythings scaly o' Nine-fathom-Tim when his back's turned, look out, look out,—I'll keel-haul you and your ship's company, if I tramp fifty miles to do it.' 'Mum's the word,' said he, and just as he was swearing he'd keep the cat in the bag without fail, up drove the new craft, or coach as they call it, I paid the fellow his dubs, took up a berth on the forecastle, and after a few ins and outs and ups and downs, here I am your honour, much at your honour's service."

"Well, my fine fellow, I think you managed very well, but unfortunately your captain is not in town, and what is worse, I do not know where to find him.—Would to heaven that I could! for I fear that he is in great danger."

"*Danger!*" cried Tim, starting from his seat, "why what does your honour mean? The vil-

lains, whoever they be, had better keep their claws off Captain Croiser, I can tell them, for he strikes somewhat hard now and then, and if-so-be your honour would only let me know where to lay a finger on——”

“Why, my good fellow, the facts are simply these; Captain Croiser has left town for Chat-ham, with his friend Monsieur Rannolini.”

“Your honour means the furriner?”

“Yes, Tarpaulin, the same. Well now,—but you must be very careful not to mention this to a soul.”

“Your honour may trust Tim for keeping a secret close. At least he could tell ye one or two that would make your honour’s eyes open a little.”

“Very good! Then attend to this.—Since they went away, I have found out that there are some enemies of Captain Croiser in London, who have sent down spies on the Kent road to arrest your captain and his friend, and put them into prison. Now, I very much want, if it be possible, to inform Captain Croiser of this, in order that he may get out of the country with his friend as fast as may be, but unfortunately the captain has forgotten to leave his address with me, and I have

no knowledge where to find him, and I am in hourly fear that he will be returning to London and get caught by these fellows on the road! If that should happen, Tarpaulin, I wouldn't even answer for his life.—Now, my fine fellow, you know your captain's habits, you may happen to know also the inn at which he is likely to put up. Tell me, therefore, is there any device by which we can let him know of the danger in which he is?—Can you think of any expedient?—If you could but convey a note or message to him, there is no sum that I would not give you!" moving towards his desk.

"'Vast heaving there, your honour, 'vast heaving," interrupted Tim, much moved, "as to money, it's not all the dirt that ever was coined could make me bear-a-hand for Captain Croiser a peg faster than I will without a farthing. For, your honour—" Tim seemed on the point of blubbing, "I looks on Captain Croiser as the best friend I've got, or even as a son, for the matter o' that, seeing I've sailed with him high and low, breeze and storm, since he was but a youngster, as I may say; I'm sure, and begging your honour's pardon, if Sal Moffat had been his mother I couldn't have cared more about him!—The Bermugian-built

villains! If ye'd only let me know, sir, whom they be that's after this trick, I'd sarve 'em out, on the word of a sailor, I would, sir, and ye may take my bible oath of it!"

"Yes, yes, Tarpaulin, I don't doubt you would do that, if it were possible, but unfortunately it is not; and I am only afraid that while we are talking of it, the damage may be done."

"Ay, ay, your honour, just so," said Tim, coming to a full consciousness of the impending danger, his energy at once prompting him to the usual alacrity which marked all his steps. "Let me see: where did your honour say that he was gone?"

"Down to Chatham."

"Your honour's sartin of that?"

"Sure, if he has not changed his mind. He told me Chatham himself."

"Well then, sir, he's no baby I know, to be shifting from one fancy to another, like a sou-westerly wind. And when, sir, did he say he'd come up?"

"To-night, or to-morrow morning at the farthest."

"Well then, your honour!" exclaimed Tim, joyfully snapping his fingers and cutting a slight

caper with his feet. "I have it, I have it, your honour! A pint o' grog to a gallon o' water, but I find him out within twelve hours, or never trust Nine-fathom Tim again!"

"How? Explain yourself! I don't understand you," returned **, very eagerly, for he was, as the reader must see, deeply interested in opening some communication with Croiser, though he hardly saw how it was to be effected.

"Why, your honour," said Tarpaulin, "the long and short o' the matter is this; I'll be off this minute and put myself aboard o' one o' them packet craft bound to Chatham, like the one I came up in this morning, and I've only to set myself well up forrard in the bows of her.—I, your honour'll remember, am Nine-fathom Tim—and the deuce is in it, if he can't see me coming along, half a mile off."

"But perhaps he may not be on the road," said **, smiling at the seaman's odd fancy.

"Well, better still, your honour, for if he's 'in the town, I've only to walk up and down once or twice, and in case his honour doesn't take an old shipmate for a church steeple under weigh, why there's little fear o' his missing me. Just let me once start and I warrant I'll find him within the

twelve hours yet!" and Tarpaulin moved towards the door in a hurry to depart at once.

"Stay, stay, my good fellow," said **, "there is no hurry for five minutes. By this time," touching the bell once more, "they have, I doubt not, prepared some refreshment for you. Go below and lay in some slight stock for your journey, while I consider what you propose, and if I can hit on no better plan, I will write a note for you to take down to Captain Croiser."

Tarpaulin having done as he was desired, and ** having, on a calm reconsideration of the matter, found that this project of Tarpaulin with all its deficiencies was nevertheless the best which, in the emergency of the case, could be devised, wrote a few lines without signature to Croiser, made Tarpaulin slip them within the double folding of his shirt collar, and then sent him off with a confidential servant to take his place on the stage about to start immediately at one o'clock.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night in darkness lost ;
Hope not sunshine every hour,
Fear not clouds will always lower.”

BUT if ** was alarmed, and with sufficient reason, at the minister's obtaining intelligence as to the character of his visitors, how much more apprehensive would he not have been had he guessed to what extent the minister's information went !

Though the spies, actually in his pay at Plymouth, had not pointed out Croiser with sufficient clearness for his employer to recognise the description, they nevertheless dwelt so strongly on the character and appearance of Rannolini—judging him of the first importance—that the minister, though he could hardly believe the suspicions which arose in his mind, yet at once discerned who it was most likely to be. The same in-

formants also acquainted him with the fact of the foreigners having been wrecked on their passage. This, they said, supposing that the waterlogged timber vessel, in which our friends arrived, was the original ship in which they had started from France. They then proceeded to say that a fine new vessel, originally intended for smuggling, had been purchased by the foreigners, and had then either sailed, or was on the point of sailing for Dover, for the purpose, as the writer supposed, of conveying the strangers back to France. The minister was now fairly puzzled. He could no longer doubt that these objects of universal suspicion were the same with those respecting whom he had received the delectable epistle of Puff and Bombast, and whom his artist had met on the road to Devon. On referring, however, to the sketch then so hurriedly taken, he could trace but little resemblance to the daring individual to whom his suspicions—and I must add his wishes—so clearly pointed, since the little likeness which his imagination was able to trace, was marred by a pair of large black eyes; whereas he well knew the foreigner in question was distinguished by orbs of a piercing grey: still less did it enter into his conception that

Captain Croiser could be one of the denounced, since he well knew that Portsmouth was the harbour in which he had always hitherto arrived; and that if he had suffered shipwreck he must have mentioned the circumstance to him, in order to have obtained the means of procuring a new vessel. Still, despite of all the conflicting evidence which presented itself on the face of this affair, the description given by his last informant,—on whom he implicitly relied—so unequivocally represented the foreigner to be one whom he had for years exerted his whole energies in vain to subdue, that his soul leapt within him at the idea of ensnaring his enemy in his toils at last. The agitation of the moment scarcely permitted him to come to a conclusion as to the course it would be most prudent to adopt. Two plans presented themselves to him. “If,” these were his thoughts, “if he really is in England at this moment, it is only for me to announce the fact publicly, and the hue and cry will fly with the gale from one end of the country to another. Individually and collectively Britain will be up in arms to guard our shores, and an escape is utterly impossible. If, on the other hand, I should do this, and these suspected persons on being apprehended,

should prove not to be him, but some mere paltry spy, the laugh will be completely turned against us, and we have disappointments enough to madden us without such an addition. For after all I must take into the account the probability of such a mischance. I know by experience what fools these agents of mine occasionally prove. This is not the first time that such a suspicion has arisen, to be proved fallacious! I cannot, knowing his wily policy, the depth of his cunning, his care of himself, his prudence, I cannot, even with all that is before me, think that he would prove so venturous, so madly daring, as to go to this extreme of temerity, and land on a shore so hostile to him,—so teeming with danger. How was he to have escaped our cruisers whom nothing scarcely can pass? I know it has before now been asserted that he has been in England, but I cannot believe it! I dare not risk the open assertion of it! No, I must proceed by a surer course, I must send down trustworthy people to Dover, with orders to find some excuse for arresting this mate of their vessel, who must be nearly arrived there by this time. He is the person I suppose on whom they rely to take them back. Without him they will be wholly at a loss, and in our power.

Parties of two or three shall be left at all the principal towns on their route, from London to the very sea-shore. They shall not know who I suspect him to be, therefore they will not be able to divulge my secret; and in case of failure, no harm will be done. My prey has not yet escaped me. I have waited long and toiled hard for my triumph; but I dare to think that it approaches at last."

This, the reader will bear in mind, was on Wednesday morning; the day on which Pitt received the information, the day on which Croiser and Rannolini had started off for Chatham. Pursuant to the views which he had taken on this momentous occasion, the minister lost no time in taking the necessary steps, first, to find out where these said foreigners were in town, and next, if not at present in town, where they had been and whither they had gone.

The reader may judge of his surprise and rage when he at length traced them to their hotel in Albemarle Street, thence to the house of **, and finally to their departure for the Dover road: this last piece of information having been obtained from one of the footmen, to whom it was told by the postilion. Further than this, however, he

was wholly at a loss, for Rannolini with that extraordinary foresight which was one of his greatest endowments, which ever stood him in such admirable stead, and for which he long continued so remarkable, had taken precautions that defied further tracking.

Beyond a mere valise they had brought no baggage, and even this they had not left behind. One of the gentlemen had gone out to hire—from whence they knew not—the carriage which they used, and on either day it was a different one. These circumstances Pitt ascertained just before going down to the House at a late hour in the afternoon, and concluding, from all he heard, that they had already left London to embark, and that probably Tarpaulin had arrived at Dover, he hastily sent down such persons as he could hurriedly select for fear of their escaping him; and unable thus at a moment's notice, to take such effective measures as he had before contemplated, he was obliged to hurry off to his usual nightly duties in a state of rage, excitement, and suspense, so little to be envied, that a station thrice as high as his, would be but a paltry repayment for its endurance.

In the mean time Rannolini, ever mindful that he was in an enemy's country, and having before his

eyes the system of espionage with which he was so well acquainted in France, continued to take the most scrupulous precautions against detection. For this purpose he desired Croiser, who was well acquainted with the road, to make the postilions halt at the first turning that might be distant some two miles from Rochester; then dismounting, they paid the postilion not only for their present journey, but also for one which they engaged him to take on that day-week, appointing him to be at the same hotel in Albemarle-street at ten o'clock in the morning. Croiser then very coolly flung the valise over his shoulder, and trudged down the road which led in a totally different direction from that of their true destination to Rochester; while the postilion respectfully touching his hat, turned about and drove back to London, never doubting that he had seen them set forth on their true route, and that he should meet them again "at Philippi."

"There goes an honest fool, Croiser!" said Rannolini, "and to any information which he can give, all the world is welcome. Now that he is out of sight, let us turn back into our proper road. We must find some young rustic to carry your burthen. What a delightful ride we have had!"

As the reader, however, already knows, it was now nearly three o'clock. On arriving in Chatham, Croiser dismissed the bearer of his portmanteau, and carried it in his hand until they arrived at a little tavern, where they engaged some rooms and then, walking into the town, hired a couple of horses for a ride, as if they had been inhabitants. From this time the reader is also acquainted with their riding round the lines, and their trip to Sheerness on the next day by water. They contrived to manage these matters so quietly, and in a manner so free from the slightest appearance of consequence, that they were duly neglected by the insolent waiters, unheeded by the inquisitive landlord, and in short taken for "mere no-bodies."

They had returned from their excursion along the banks of the Medway about half an hour, and were conversing together in their sitting-room as to their various projects and the necessity of their returning to town that night, when Rannolini, who was pacing the room, suddenly paused before Croiser, now reposing himself on a wretched apology for a sofa, the hardness of which only made his bones ache the more.—"Hark!" said he,

“there is some sailor in the street below, singing a song. That is not so bad! Why surely I have heard that air before! listen, Croiser!”

“What!” exclaimed the latter in tones of astonishment, after a moment’s pause, as a well known burden met his ear—“Is it possible? Hush, monsieur! It is—it must be!” Then rushing to the window—“What can have happened!—see, as I live, it is Tarpaulin!”

“Eh, what’s that you say?” quickly demanded Rannolini, alarmed in his turn—“Tarpaulin?”

“No less, I assure you! Come to the window and you may see him. You may prepare yourself for some catastrophe. Rely on it, he has been sent to find us, and that long head of his has hit on this expedient. Look at him! the old boy has actually put his right arm within his jacket, to sham being a cripple and escape a press-gang.”

“True, Croiser, so he has. I fear that all is not right! Do you hasten down and pretend, as an old shipmate, to bring him in, and give him a glass of spirits. Quick, lose not an instant! Let us hear what he has to say. We can never learn bad news too soon.”

Putting on his hat, Croiser hastened to obey Rannolini’s orders, and succeeded without dif-

ficulty in bringing Tarpaulin up stairs, since in the bustle which during the war-time always animated this town, a disabled sailor singing a bad song was no marvel.

On being admitted into the room, Tarpaulin cast a scrutinizing glance around to see that they were unwatched, and then gave a low shout of joy, exclaiming " Hurrah, your honour, I've found ye at last ; I thought I should be able to telegraph with you somehow or other !" and ripping open his shirt-collar with his large clasp knife, he presented the concealed despatch to Croiser, who, breaking the seal, proceeded to read it to Rannolini. The latter having heard its contents, paused for a moment, while the only change which his countenance displayed was in the slight expression of severity that gathered for awhile upon his ample brow ; then with a readiness rarely displayed in such imminent danger, he proceeded to give directions for their conduct.

" Croiser," said he, " we have not a second to spare. See that your pistols are loaded and trustworthy, while I look to mine. Remember that you have all your papers about you. Take out any little thing that may be valuable from that valise, and then order up a hasty refreshment.

We must ride hard to-night.—This is the crisis of our fate! If Pitt succeeds, we fall.—But if we escape—it is over with him and all his crew!” handing back the little note, in which * * had said every thing in French that it was necessary to express, and that in the fewest possible words. “Despatch, my Croiser, despatch,” he continued, “time is life with us at present. When the waiter comes up, send for the bill, say that we wish to pay for every thing to-night in order to start at an early hour in the morning. Pay him moreover for our beds and breakfasts, and two places in the first coach, which you must order him to take for us. You must say something about our going to see an old friend in the neighbourhood, towards town, and that we are not certain of returning to-night, but will be back as early as possible in the morning. Let our honest friend here take his meal quickly, and then send him out to some clothier’s shop, with orders to buy three farmers’ suits, one for each of us: appoint a rendezvous at some convenient spot with which you are acquainted, on the outskirts of the town towards Dover, and in the meantime I can make use of what day-light remains in purchasing three horses. I hope you

have followed my advice and have cashed that bill?"

"Never fear me, monsieur," replied the captain, "if money can extricate us we have more than enough —"

"So, that is good! I have perilled all upon this throw, and I will redeem my stake nobly yet, or I am much mistaken in myself. Pitt may do very well to bully those babblers in the Chamber, but he has no *garçon* in me!" As the dangers thickened around him, and life, and fame, and empire, depended on the merest odds of Fate, he seemed the more to exult in a stern exalted glee, the sublimity of which inferior minds are unable to comprehend. As he once remarked to Croiser, who commented on this trait in his character, "It is then, Croiser, that I taste of the true ecstasy of life! If nature were not thus to frame some minds, and bid them chase peril for the delight which it excites, how think you should we witness the achievement of any thing that is great? I can cause this feeling to arise in my mind at will, and it has always been the sure augur of success. It is true that I am now in the vigour of manhood, and the energies of the soul may in time re-

fuse such a bidding—then adieu to prosperity. But I have no wish for life to gain such experience. I have a presentiment, Croiser—but no matter—it alludes to years far in futurity—the present is enough for our care!”

CHAPTER IX.

“ Swift fly their coursers as the storms of Heaven,
When thunder-clouds by tempest winds are driven ;
Wrath threatens the future, Danger marks the past,
And dread Destruction rides the fearful blast.”

DENTONE.

HAVING minutely and carefully followed the directions of Rannolini, Croiser soon had the satisfaction of finding himself mounted on a noble horse, which after some little difficulty they were able to purchase at a large sum. He was dressed in the style of an English farmer of that day, while on his left rode Rannolini and Tarpaulin similarly equipped.

On reaching the place of rendezvous, they had put on their several disguises, and stuffed their other garments into a place of concealment at hand, where they were not likely to be found for at least some days. Rannolini being unable to

speaking more than a very few words of English, was—in case of their being accosted—to pass off for a deaf and dumb sort of imbecile; and Tarpaulin, in order that he might not betray his nautical identity, was to take upon himself the character of a person “in drink”; a part which he was ever fitted to play to admiration, but in which he was now likely to acquit himself better than ever, since to a stranger, the sailor-like and ridiculous manner in which he clung to his horse’s mane, had more the appearance of inebriety than aught beside.

As they pursued their flight at a most rapid pace, Rannolini amused himself with alternate mirth at the awkwardness of Tim’s horsemanship, and exultation at the beauty of the night; which if not preeminently calculated to favour his escape, yet granted to him—that which singularly enough he seemed to value still more—a clear view of the country through which they were passing. The moon was yet in its first quarter, and a light north-westerly breeze, while it favoured our sailors on their path, cleared the heavens above of every fleece that could otherwise have obscured the brightness of the night, and allowed the orb

above to shoot down her trembling but enchanting light, displaying hill and vale, forest and pasturage, in all the luxuriance with which Summer is resigned into the arms of Autumn.

Going at the utmost speed which consideration for their horses would permit, and never baiting their steeds except at some low and solitary sort of hostel, our friends at length reached the far famed city of Canterbury, where the arrogant but murdered churchman, and the royal hero repose side by side, to prove how much exists in memory, and how little in fame!

Turning aside very shortly from the main street, Croiser conducted his party at a slow rate through one on the left hand, which passed the outer gate of the abbey-yard. Rannolini seeing the building beneath the arch, rode through, and persisted in taking a slight glance at it before he left the shores of England; then quickly rejoining his companions who waited for him, they proceeded up the street, which seemed in some measure overhung by the old-fashioned houses on either side. In a few minutes they arrived at a ruin, whose octagon and castellated turrets came nobly forth in the clear moonlight. Touched with that melancholy beauty which ruthless time seems to bestow as

some slight compensation for his ravages, the party instinctively drew up and halted.

“What ruins are these, Croiser?” enquired Rannolini.

“The ruins of Saint Augustine’s monastery,” replied the captain: “but move a little to the left, there are two still finer towers standing—here we have them. You see that gothic window. Within is the chamber in which our celebrated queen Elizabeth was confined during the reign of Mary.”

“Hah! do you say so? Elizabeth was a woman of ten thousand—but cruel and unamiable—as women always are when they forsake the walk for which Nature designed them. It is a beautiful ruin. How enchanting it looks! So much for greatness! it is not worth the chase it gives its votaries. — But forward! or greatness will be giving chase to us, and that in an enemy’s country will not be quite so pleasant.”

“In a few seconds they gained the outside of the town, and spurring forward their horses, they resumed their former rapid rate along a road not generally frequented; the principal one lying on the right-hand. This, however, Croiser had thought it prudent to avoid, as long as it was in his power, for fear of interruption, since the note

from * *, had warned him of the minister's emissaries being on the look-out on every part of their route.

After proceeding for some six miles, our friends were however obliged to turn into the ordinary Dover road once more, at the little village of Bridge. The hour was about midnight, and saving an occasional cur who awoke from its slumber at the noise of their horses' hoofs, no unwelcome signs of life presented themselves. As these sounds gradually died away in their rear, they found themselves at the foot of a steep hill.

"This part of the country," said Rannolini, "does not seem of so level a description as that through which we passed on the first day's journey. I have scarcely seen a plain of any note since we started from Chatham."

But Croiser seemed lost in some unusually deep reverie, and replied not until they reached the summit of the hill. "See," said he, extending his horsewhip before him —

But Rannolini was too quick for him, and interrupted what he was about to say with the sudden exclamation, "Ah! Here we have a field at last! What call you this?" he continued, as

his eagle eye measured the wide space extending before him. "By whatever name it may be designated, it is on this plain that England will soon be lost and won. What name has it, Croiser?"

"These are Barham Downs."

"Barham!" musingly. "The Battle of Barham then will be decisive! Come, I must ride over this ground."

"Nay, monsieur; consider every instant is of the first import."

"Bah! Croiser! Ninny that thou art! You know nothing about the matter. For what did I come to England, think you, if it were not for this very purpose? Come, come. If Pitt himself, and all his babbling majority were here, I would not decamp until I had seen this field." And without waiting for further reply, he dashed the rowels into the side of his steed, and set off.

"Tarpaulin," said Croiser, seeing that he must follow, "do you remain here, we shall be back in a few seconds. You have arms?"

"Ay, ay, your honour, I've a pair o' pistols in my pocket and an oaken stretcher in my hand, that might floor the old un himself." Croiser then putting his horse to full speed, came up with

Rannolini, just as he paused on the crown of a gently swelling eminence at the other end of the Downs.

“ See,” said the foreigner pointing with his whip and describing the ground, as his young officer halted at his side. “ This is such a field as I would have chosen myself. We shall approach by the Dover road on our left, we shall occupy this position, this is the highest ground ; our flank will be covered by that line of hedge on our right, and our rear will rest upon the one behind us. The enemy, on the contrary, must take up the inferior ground, and on the instant that he attempts to retreat, it must be down the steep hill which we have just ascended. One good charge such as I have seen our friend Murat make before now, and they must in such a position be thrown into immediate and irretrievable confusion. Once let us meet here, Croiser, and our difficulties are vanquished. See—Hah!—what cry was that—hark !”

“ It is Tarpaulin’s voice, monsieur. Something must have happened !”

“ Quick ; quick, Croiser, for your life. There, there, again—Quick, for your life I say !”

Dashing their spurs into the foaming sides of the generous steeds they rode, our friends darted

off with the swiftness of the wind, to the assistance of Tarpaulin, whose voice had thus suddenly but distinctly been heard by them as if shouting for assistance.

“ Quick, quick, I say, Croiser ! See, yonder they are,” repeated Rannolini, pointing towards the seaman who was struggling with several assailants. “ He has been set upon by some villains.”

“ You are right, Monsieur, we are discovered, pray draw your pistols.”

“ Draw, but do not fire I command you, Croiser ! See, they are attacking him in front and forcing him down the hill. We have a fair opportunity to charge them. Make your horse plunge directly upon them ; follow my example. Now—on ! now or never !” Urging the animal which he rode, to its utmost strength, Rannolini leaped, in the manner he had described to Croiser, directly into the midst of the attacking party, while the captain, who was immediately behind, followed him in his course. On their wheeling round to renew the charge, they found three of their enemies on the ground, and the fourth grappling with Tarpaulin.

“ Huzzah ! true blue for ever ! Take that you thief o’ the night !” shouted the latter, flourishing his ready cudgel at arm’s length, and then bestow-

ing all its weight and force on the head of his opponent, who, startled by the sudden and unexpected charge of Rannolini, had let go his hold, and now fell senseless to the ground, where the rest of his companions lay struggling. One appeared crushed by his horse which had fallen on him, and the others were so severely contused, that they were scarcely able to rise, while the three emancipated steeds had taken to instant flight along the common.

“Jump off, Croiser,” cried Rannolini, on seeing the true state of affairs. “Be quick, do you and Tarpaulin give me your reins to hold, you must secure these scoundrels as prisoners. Not one must escape.”

“Right, Monsieur,” returned Croiser, “here Tarpaulin, give your horse to M. Rannolini. Jump off with all haste, and help me to secure these rascals.”

“Ay, ay, your honour,” replied Tim, doing as he was ordered with the most cheerful alacrity, “ay, ay, your honour,” he continued to grumble forth as he proceeded to execute his order; “I’ll sarve ’em out, the cowardly ruffians, trust me, to set upon an honest fellow without so much as giving fair odds.”

“Come, come, Tarpaulin,” interrupted his commander, “don’t talk, but be quick.”

“Croiser,” said Rannolini, “take a pocket handkerchief from each of the prisoners, and tie their legs, and then I’ll tell you how I wish them to be disposed of.”

Meanwhile drawing a pistol from his pocket, “I will perform guard over these fellows with this, and give them to understand that I shoot the first who attempts to escape.”

Having obeyed this instruction, Croiser lost no time in helping Tarpaulin to secure the only two who were in a state to get away; the one felled by the powerful blow of the seaman, not having as yet regained his senses, and the other, who lay under the horse now found to be dead, being scarcely less inanimate than the animal he had ridden.

In a few minutes more the prisoners were all secured as the foreigner had desired.

“Now then, Monsieur,” said the captain, “I think that our best plan will be to lash these men to that small stone pillar which we passed in the middle of the plain. Once secured to it, they will be too far beyond hearing to obtain relief soon.”

“No, no, Croiser; should they by any accident

be heard from the main road, they will be succoured. It seems cruel to cut them off from all relief, but it is either their safety or our's that must be risked. Necessity is imperious. No! we must carry them into yonder thicket, and bind them to some tree. The traveller that would not be afraid to search out another in distress on an open plain by moonlight, would yet hesitate and be loth to try the same experiment when the cries for help came from a thicket. They will suspect an ambush and pass by. Be quick, let us lose no time. Send Tarpaulin forward, armed, to take charge of the two ablest, and mount the others on these horses, I will lead one and you the other: and Croiser, when you have taken them into the thicket, and lashed them with their feet to the trees in two parties, be sure that you take every sous of money from their pockets. It will have two good effects—we shall be taken for highway-men, and such an account will utterly confound Pitt; and in the next place—men without gold, are in England without power. Haste, Croiser, for your life.”

“I will, Monsieur; and now give me back my horse.”

In a few minutes, despite of every remon-

strance and entreaty, the prisoners were secured in the manner which Rannolini had pointed out, and then conveyed into the thicket at no great distance. Having no other ligatures at command, the neckerchiefs of this unfortunate party were now made instrumental to their bondage by lashing them in pairs, but opposite to one another, with their feet secured to the boles of two trees. Their pockets being duly rifled, and the usual threats having been held forth in case they should presume to cry out for assistance, Croiser and Tarpaulin returned to Rannolini; after removing the dead horse from the road, they once more mounted the faithful creatures that had already served them so well, and conscious that everything depended on the celerity of their movements, they put the mettle of their coursers to a still harder trial than before.

Rannolini no longer seemed to be in the mood, or to possess the time for laughing at the continued and ticklish struggle by which alone Tarpaulin was enabled to maintain his seat, as they flew along the road whose dust was whirled in circling clouds behind them. His mirth was changed to apprehension, as every now and then, on glancing back, he beheld the sailor

on the point of coming to the ground, clinging to the mane with both his hands, and leaning his immense long body forward, his grim features betraying the difficult part which he had to sustain. No, Rannolini seemed at last to awake to a consciousness of all the perils that surrounded him; but if the severity of his brow denoted a knowledge of his danger, the eye bespoke a spirit equal to all.

Scarcely a word was now spoken, and it was only during the brief moments allowed for baiting their horses at an occasional little cabin on the way-side, that Tarpaulin related to them the manner in which he was attacked. He had barely been left by Croiser two minutes, when a party of four horsemen passed him at a brisk trot from Dover. In a few seconds he heard them halt, and after a short conversation, they turned back, suddenly surrounded him, and inquired which was the way to Canterbury. Before he could perceive their designs, they attacked, and would soon have overpowered him, but for the timely charge of Rannolini and Croiser, which, as the reader knows, dismounted three of the assailants, two of their horses taking immediate flight, third being killed by its head coming in contact with the hoofs of Rannolini's

charger, and the fourth joining its companions on the instant that Tarpaulin felled its rider. That they were some of Pitt's minions there could be no doubt, since they had recognised Tarpaulin, and had said something about apprehending him as a horse-stealer, which proved that they must have heard of the circumstance, and used this as an excuse for getting hold of his person.

Pursuing their flight as already described, without the further loss of a moment's time, they at length arrived at the wished-for town of Dover. The old church at the entrance of the suburbs was tolling out the hour of half-past two. As they dismounted from the sinking and galled animals, which had borne them so gallantly, they turned them into a sort of walled paddock on the left hand side, the gate of which happened to be open.

They now stole quietly through the by lanes, and keeping in the shade, they soon succeeded in reaching the harbour without being once interrogated as to their destination. On arriving at the quay, the greatest difficulty was how to get a boat, since from the little nook of the basin in which they now stood, they could hear the sleepy took-out stalking up and down on the wooden

pier close at hand, and mumbling the chorus of some old sea song to keep himself awake.

In this dilemma, however, they did not remain long, for Tarpaulin, with his usual readiness, desired his captain to remain by the side of the foreigner, while he swam off and cut adrift one of the many boats moored in the harbour.

This having been accomplished, he took the painter or little cable in his mouth, and towed the skiff ashore, saying "If his honour and the fur-riner would get in and lie down in the bottom of her, he'd just tow her out of the harbour in the same fashion; and as for that land-lubber who was knocking his pumps about up there, to the tune the cow died of, he should know no more of it than my ould mother, and she,—God bless her!—went to Davy Jones one cold morning as she"—

"Yes, yes, Tim, we know all that, so get ready to tow us as you propose—you monster of a dolphin!" then turning to Rannolini, Croiser told him of Tarpaulin's proposal, and in a few minutes they were almost imperceptibly moving down the harbour. Presently the clocks proclaimed the hour of three, and just as the look-out, thus roused to his duty, hallooed those boastful words "all's well," Croiser heard the voice of Tarpaulin whispering in a low tone from under the lee of the boat,

“Bad luck to us, your honour, if these villains haven’t got a drift-boom chained right across the narrow o’ the harbour! However, your honour, blessings on the chance of it! there is some sort of a fisherman’s cobble on the leeward side of it, so I’ve towed ye opposite, and while I dive under the boom and cut her adrift, your honour must manage to get the furriner into her, without making any noise for that marine-adrift up there to hear us.”

Unfortunate as this occurrence was, it could not be obviated otherwise than as Tim had pointed out; following his advice, therefore, the captain at last succeeded in getting Rannolini into the little fishing boat on the other side of the boom, without having apparently awakened the suspicions of the sentinel, or sustained any further inconvenience than that of having wetted their feet. Tarpaulin now took them in tow once more, taking the greatest care not to make any movements in swimming, which should cause a plashing of the water.

Having at last cleared the harbour, he got on board, and they then took to their oars; at first but gently, till they increased their distance from the land, when the captain and the mate gave way with all their strength towards the vessel

which Tarpaulin now beheld where he had left her some thirty-six hours before.

They had not proceeded very far, however, when Rannolini's apprehensive eye discovered a long and low black object approaching from the shore. "Croiser, we are discovered!" said he.

"Where, monsieur?" demanded the captain, looking astern. "Yes," he continued, "you are right. Now then, Tarpaulin, pull for your life."

"Ay, ay, your honour, like a young greyhound for his breakfast!"

For a few seconds they gave way with heart and soul in silence, their light boat skimming with great rapidity over the gently ruffled surface of the water; but it soon became apparent that their pursuers were gaining on them. "That galley, your honour," remarked the phlegmatic Tim, "is heavily manned. She's double banked, I can tell by the jerks of her oars in their rollocks."

"Pull, Tim, I say—pull for your life!"

"Ay, ay, your honour! Them's the preventative men as she's got in her, I know them by the lubberly time they keeps. Them and I's old acquaintances, your honour."

"The deuce take your acquaintances. Pull—

pull, I say, you old fool! Had we only gained a little more distance before this unfortunate chase commenced—”

“Ah! your honour, if ‘*hads*’ had been *chads*, we should have had fish for breakfast. Them greenhorns astern, don’t pull so bad for preventatives! I wish, your honour, we were but a leetel more even-matched; we might give them a bit of a tussell for it, round our barkey here, back to Dover pier, and out again. But here we are nigh alongside now. Some of them chaps aboard must be stirring. ‘Pearl, ahoy,’” hailing the lugger, which had been named after the ill-fated schooner, but without turning his head or ceasing his efforts at the oar. “Holloa” was the reply soon heard from on board. “All hands make sail,” continued Tim, “and clear away the stern chaser. Now, your honour, them lubbers are coming up! Now for it! A long pull, and together O! Now, sir!—now again! So once more! Here we are—in bow—in all!” And as the little boat shot up alongside, Tarpaulin seized Rannolini in his arms, and leapt on board in an instant, and Croiser quickly following his example, once more, with inexpressible joy, found himself upon the deck of a vessel whose crew obeyed him alone.

Every thing having been prepared in case of such an emergency, in a few seconds the cable was cut, the ample lug-sails hoisted to the breeze, and the lugger, which had been built for sailing, moved quickly through the sea, leaving the chasing party at some twenty yards' distance.

The officer's voice was now heard urging his men on, and the foam flew from their oars as they exerted themselves to overtake their prey. It was soon seen to be in vain. Enraged at the escape of his intended victims, the officer gave the command to "fire a volley at those rascals standing on the poop;" before, however, they could execute this malicious order, Croiser applied the port-fire to the gun, which he had already directed—it flashed forth—the shot whizzed through the air! A crash was heard—a shriek, and the boat settled in the wave. "Bah!" exclaimed Rannolini, angrily stamping on the deck as he beheld this catastrophe, "that was unnecessary cruelty."

"No, Monsieur, I heard the order given to fire upon us, and they deserve this for the wanton cruelty which would maim those whom they cannot catch."

"But those poor seamen, they will be drowned for the fault of their officer!"

“ Oh, no ! there is the boat in which we came off, it is near them, they can swim to it.”

“ True, I had not thought of that. And now for France, *ma belle France* ! Croiser, thou art a jewel of an officer, let me embrace thee on our escape, for it would never have been effected but for you. How am I to reward you ? and that honest Tarpaulin.—I wish, by the by, that his name were easier to pronounce. In a few hours,—think of that,—in a few hours we shall be in France.” I may, however, safely leave to the imagination of my reader the transports which filled the breast of Rannolini at thus escaping from the snares of his enemy, and though he by no means underrated the dangers which he had braved with so much temerity, yet he considered the information which he had thus gained to have been cheaply acquired at the risks which he had run. The foreigner no longer seemed to entertain a doubt of his designs on England being crowned with success, and exulting in the triumph which he deemed to be awaiting him, he spent some time in dictating to Croiser, and giving him instructions as to how he was to proceed ; but as the reader will in due time be made acquainted with the nature of these orders,

we shall pass them over without notice for the present.

Croiser and Rannolini being now satisfied that all pursuit was at an end, refreshed themselves after the fatigues of their journey, and took with gratitude the scanty sleep which was allowed them, before the arrival of their lugger off Marquise; then a little insignificant fishing town, on the *Côtes du Nord*.

The captain having accompanied Rannolini to the shore, and embraced him before setting off for Brussels, returned to his lugger and made all sail down channel, while the foreigner proceeded to meet his friend D——c, now waiting for him at the above named city, impressed with the belief that the latter was only making a private tour of observation in France, which he was well known to be in the habit of doing. Nor did the duration of his absence appear to be inconsistent with this account of himself, since he had not as yet been absent three weeks, but in this brief space of time what events had been crowded !

CHAPTER X.

“ What heart of man unmoved can lie
When plays the smile in beauty’s eye ?
What heart of warrior e’er could bear
The beam of beauty’s crystal tear ? ”

HOGG.

DESPITE of the many imminent dangers which Croiser now knew to be hanging over him, he determined to repair without loss of time to Plymouth. When coming to this resolution, he tried to analyse those emotions which dictated such a course ; but his efforts were unattended with any satisfactory results. Still, amid the chaos of passions prevailing in his breast, one feeling predominating over the rest, convinced him that it was his duty to go. He had *promised* to see Margarita at the earliest moment. That moment was now at hand, and could be spared for the fulfilment of his word. However incompatible he might deem his love for herself with his engagements

to Rannolini, one thing was evident, beyond all doubt he must return to her.

Margarita herself, had, in the mean while, found ample leisure to ponder over and reconsider several matters that her passion had not hitherto allowed her to judge fairly. He had heard her avowal of affection for him. She had received his declaration of love, there was therefore a strong tie between them. And to whom was she thus bound? To a man who shrouded himself in the most inscrutable mystery. It was true that his manners and his language bespoke him to be a gentleman, nay, they seemed to belong to high birth, but what was his profession? On what did he depend? With whom was he linked? Who might be that singular and still more mysterious foreigner, Rannolini? Who or whatever he was, their fates seemed inexplicably bound together, and their mutual pursuit, if she might guess from what she had heard and seen, was -- She shuddered to think of all that her suspicions forced on her unwilling mind. Soon, however, with a quick reaction of thought, she would turn to the brighter side of the picture, draw forth the little sketch she had made of his features, and blame them for wanting the spirited and varied expression of the original; recall the

gentle intonations of his voice as they once used to fall on her ear, and the accents of love and admiration which they breathed, or read over the many scraps of his poetry which she had received during their short acquaintance. Then would she fancy his figure once more pleading at her side, or chafing her lifeless temples, to restore her from exhaustion back to life, or leaping with her in his arms from the decks of a sinking vessel, when the elements were raging in all their fury round them. "What base ingratitude!" she would exclaim, starting up, "thus to suspect the generous being to whom I am twice indebted for my life! Can I ever regard another human being as I do him? What are all mankind beside him? Even were he all that I fear him to be, surely he deserves the poor prize he has twice gained; but no, not if he were *all* that I fear—and yet"—Thus was she alternately swayed as the different emotions of love and principle possessed her heart, until at last even the very mystery that hung around him, and the struggle which it occasioned, only tended to increase those feelings which she entertained in his favour.

Utterly perplexed as to the course she should adopt, she determined to find out the lady (a friend of hers) who had fainted on recognising Croiser,

and endeavour to learn who he was. In the pursuit of the first part of this determination there was little or no difficulty, but to gaining the required knowledge there was an insuperable objection. The lady resolutely refused to disclose a syllable: "More mystery still," thought poor Margarita as she took her lonely walk towards Croiser's favourite old tower, after this unfavourable interview. "And Charlotte, too, now that I recollect it, I almost promised her that I would not allow Croiser to pay his attentions to me; however, I suppose that I am freed from that, since she so openly flirted with Rannolini, before Croiser's face. Besides, she saw him constantly at my side and made no remarks on it. Alas! my dear, but giddy sister, if so much anxiety is the lot of my first, my only affection, what sorrows must be in store for thee! How the changes in our minds alter the external appearance of nature! I can scarcely believe that these are the same woods, and hills, and sea, that I beheld from this very spot not twelve months since! Then, they looked bright and sunny, full of delight, now every thing wears a mournful gloom. —Well do I remember smiling at those who talked of childhood being the happiest period of life. I smiled, and well I might, I thought I was never to feel

differently ! I could not know that to concentrate the affections into one point is to leave the surrounding surface of life bleak, dull, and bare. And yet I scarcely know that I *would* recall those hours even if I could. I fear the calm happiness of girlhood is fast leaving me for ever ! Why did I sigh for the age beyond ? What would I not give to recall the last two years ? Well, since it is impossible, still let me enjoy with a double zest the fleeting portion that yet remains to me. What, after all, is the bounding joyousness of youth and its freedom from maturer cares, compared with the tide of ecstatic and blissful feelings following in the train of a first affection ? Alas, they are poor indeed ! Thus fickle Heart, art thou prone to repine over the past because it is beyond thy reach, and to despise the present for being in thy power. Though no longer the joyous scene of my childhood, yet how beautiful is this view ! Tranquil sea ! — Where is poor Croiser now ?” And Margarita, as she remembered that this was the delicious hour when, leaning on his arm, they strolled together through those picturesque glades, and to all their other charms were added the music of his voice which, whether he conversed of the different nations he had seen, their customs, their manners,

and their legends, or poured forth his soul in verse and song addressed to his fair listener, yet at all times possessed a powerful spell for her ear. As these dear remembrances stole over her soul with their soothing melancholy influence, she looked forth upon the blue and serene deep, and as the white of a distant sail struck her eye, she said, carelessly, "Such now might be his!" Somewhat interested with this fancy, she watched its gradual approach, as the gentle breeze wafted it onward. "How strange! I declare it actually does look like his vessel, but no—it cannot be;" half turning away her head to prevent her indulgence in a hope that might prove false. She felt strangely agitated, she could not forbear to turn her eye once more towards it, and at each glance it confirmed her suspicions, or I should rather say her half-indulged hopes. It seemed to steer directly for that part of the sound; soon her strained eyes caught a view of a very tall dark figure standing on the forecastle—"It is—no—yes, it is Tarpaulin,—and there is Croiser's figure also. They see me, for they are heaving-to immediately opposite the little bay below.—They hoist out the boat—here he comes!" and fluttering with delight, she hurried down from the tower towards the shore, to

meet him in whom all her dearest hopes were centered.

Her quick glance had not deceived her, and he was soon by her side, breathing the pleasure which none but lovers know. To her it almost seemed like magic, as if he had sprung up from the sea at her wish, as did the silver-footed Thetis at the call of her Achilles. Having answered her many inquiries as to how he had been employed, they pursued their favourite walk along the plantations and then returned home, when Croiser's arrival was welcomed with surprise and pleasure.

Old Nine-fathom Tim, having received instructions from his commander, now conducted his vessel to a more secluded berth in Cawsand Bay, and then made his appearance at the house, to receive his share of the good things going.

When Croiser arrived, Lord Falconer's frigate was still in the harbour, but that of the * had gone on a cruise. On the following day Lord Falconer's also stood out to sea. By these several departures Charlotte now found herself in a situation that never had any particular charms for her — she was without an *attaché*. "Oh! but," said she to herself, when considering the important point, "there's that Croiser! I had for-

gotten that I was to make a dead set at him ; and now I think of it, a great deal of flirtation has been going on between him and Margiée. Now that's very unfair of Margiée, for I gave her a sufficient warning—I must talk to her about it!" and without considering the inconsistency of her conduct, the giddy Chatty resolved to reopen the trenches before a city that had already been taken by superior force still in possession. Great, therefore, was Margiée's surprise, and not slight her confusion, at receiving a curtain lecture that night for having flirted with the appropriated person of Captain Croiser.—She tried to justify herself on the ground of Chatty's tacit renunciation by her encouragement of Rannolini. Such justification, however, was not admitted, and the grounds on which it was founded were disputed. Margarita, afraid to disclose what had taken place, determined to be patient, confident that Croiser's manner would be the best and most undeniable proof to Charlotte of the utter hopelessness of such an attachment.

On the following evening, after dinner, the sisters, leaning on Croiser's arm, strolled into the garden. No sooner did the "douce honest lad," Jamie Maxwell, behold the flowing garments of

the ladies between the trees, than he hobbled forward, saying aloud, "Gude e'en t'ye, leddies, gude e'en! Nae doubt ye'll be come to inspect the new Camelia that's just cam frae my honest kinsman Adam Gordon." Here suddenly turning a corner, his eye encountered the form of Croiser. "De'il tak it!" he suddenly exclaimed, turning back and hobbling off, "there's that dour chiel cam back agen—its ower little then that a puir lad will be minded and he in the way, sae I'll e'en say nae mair, seeing it's a clear waste o' God's breath."

Having turned aside to the French garden, and procured one of the guitars lying there, our friends walked round by the battery to Thomson's temple, which douce Jamie had so boldly asserted to be such a favourite wi' Francis Duke of Bedford. The reader already knows that this little building fronted towards the harbour, and commanded a beautiful view of the shipping, the dock-yard, and the forts that crowned the height on the opposite side. The red gleams of the sun, now setting behind the hills on the right, fell obliquely on the broad expanse of the Tamar, producing the most rich and varied effects. The sun sunk, leaving the young and pale eyed moon to preside over the scene; gradually the noise and bustle of life stilled into

silence, as the seamen on board their numerous ships, descended to their repose, until in the beautiful twilight of a summer evening, every thing seemed at peace.

After conversing on various subjects, Margarita put the guitar into Croiser's hands and requested him to sing. He no longer required any solicitation to comply with the request. Margarita was sitting on his left hand, Charlotte on his right, and inclining his head so that—if it were possible—only the former should distinguish the words, he sang as follows :

In gazing thus, say, who could dream,
What pangs of grief and care
Arise like bubbles on a stream,
To mar a world so fair ?

Or who, that views yon moonlight ray,
Soft sleeping on the main,
Could wish the garish light of day
Should ever shine again ?

Alas ! what joy my soul could prove,
Mid scenes like this we see,
Possessed—for realms of bliss above,
Of moonlight, love, and thee !

Nor pride, nor rage, might move me then,
Each wild emotion free ;
Won from the baser strife of men,
By peace, and love, and thee !

“Come,” said Charlotte, in a tone half playful,

and half jealous, when the music ceased, "you shall not tune your lyre wholly to Margiée. Sing something to me directly: nay now, Croiser, I insist." Smiling at the mixture of earnestness and play in her manner, Croiser carelessly touched a few chords, as he replied

"How shall I sing to thee, fair queen of hearts?
Mistress of many, yet faithful to none,
Sipping the honey each flower imparts,
And spurning each treasure thy beauty hath won!"
Ah! if thou lovest,
Still when thou rovest,
Think of the bee!
Lest dimly shining,
Day's orb declining,
Portions to thee,
Sweets gone and faded,
Blessings degraded,
Mournful to see!
Love where thou slightest——"

"There, that will suffice us, Master Impertinence!" interrupted Chatty, peevishly pushing the instrument on one side so as to interrupt Croiser, "I asked you for a song, and you give me a sermon."

"Well now, Chatty, I almost think you deserve it!" said Margarita.

"Do you indeed, my lady Pearl of the ocean? *you* too were in want of instruction, I presume—

a lesson in *love* for *you*; one on *prudence* being reserved for me."

"Nay, Chatty, you need not speak so harshly, and if I must say the truth, so unjustly—you must know, that if I have offended you, it was involuntarily done."

"Well, well, perhaps I do—it was this Croiser's fault, I never did like to be lectured; and on love too, my cavalier!—You are always talking about love, it is a silly stupid passion. What can you have to say in its defence?"

"First, my beautiful mademoiselle Charlotte," returned Croiser, "that you have never experienced the passion! That which you have been accustomed to term 'love,' is a transitory spurious feeling, superficial, unennobling! Far different is love I mean—a passion treated with contempt by callous clods of clay, or unthinking beings, but one that is to be feared in its ravages and wooed in its blessings. No passion is more worthy of cool investigation, since it is the spring of two thirds of the actions which are committed.—Love! Who shall condemn it? Surely not he who is acquainted with the nature of the human heart. What affords so strong a stimulus to urge man on to greatness? There are only three passions, the

vast mightiness of which can adequately fill the human heart,—Love—Ambition—Glory. What is ambition?—cheating shadow.—Ambition is empty,—it brings nothing which can yield content; the greater its possessions, the greater its desire. Riches?—they are but a despised means. What are the riches of the world to ambition? Even in the height of its success, the wretch from whom its vampire lip is drawing life, is still in the depth of his misery!—Again, with the chills of age it may pall upon the heart, for philosophy will uncloak and lay bare the cankering skeleton within, as in the case of Charles the Fifth; the pinions on which his daring flight has been upborne may give way, and plunge him into the bathos of cold contempt and scorn.—Nor does it equal Love in strength, or why did Antony flee from the mastery of the world into the arms of Cleopatra? Neither is Glory the hallowed divinity it seems. In too many cases it is only to be pursued over the mangled corpses of our fellow-creatures, and even when obtained, the clouds of calumny may arise to shut out from our view the gory meteor we have followed; or we may be snatched away before the tainted harvest of our laurels is yet reaped, and like Ambition, reason and reflection

have it at any time in their power to rend away the gorgeous plumes and trappings with which the car of Glory is covered, displaying to the eye the loathsome hearse beneath! But to what does Glory tend even in its most favourable career?—Power! and that at the best is but a couch of thorns. What then remains? there is fame, true; literary fame—but the gifts necessary to its acquirement are so rarely bestowed to an extent worth having, that it is unfair to state it as a general question. Love alone remains, and surely it is more noble than either, since it is one of the first attributes of the Deity! Would you compare its strength? Even the desire of life itself must yield to it. Urging mortals to court that which many spend a life in shunning—death! Sappho's story brings this home to our minds; or, on the other hand it may tempt the wretch weary of the burden of existence to bear that load with cheerfulness which, but a short period before, he was only anxious to lay down. Such we read in Sethos was its effect on the epicurean of Athens! From the fascinations of Ambition and Glory, I repeat, reason and reflection may disenchant us; but who can free himself from the natural impulses and warm affections of the heart? The mighty passion of

jealousy which led the Moor to commit murder terminating in suicide, was yet insufficient to extinguish the hallowed spark of love. Neither is it like the other two passions—empty. It *does* bring content—it has an end! In its pursuit, you are not necessarily mistaken or eluded. To love and to feel yourself beloved; to see in the object of your attachment, loveliness and worth, what earthly bliss can surpass this? True it is, as it will ever be on earth, your breast is filled with a thousand hopes and fears; but these merely enhance the intensity of your joy. There is no longer any space for the grovelling thoughts of existence! Each image, feeling, dream, is impassionately wrapt up in one object—whence they take their rise, to which they again tend. She is to his feelings what the heart is to the empurpled tide of life—the source of vitality, the seat of warm affection, the impulse of all action, the germ of all existence, the throne of the inmost soul—who—what shall step between, if they are firm to each other? Misfortune! No, the very griefs of love are a tender source of pleasure—its joys, transport indeed! It has always appeared to me that when once this feeling has ceased to thrill the breast—life

has thenceforth lost its salt. Then I would be content, nay, happy to die !”

“ But surely it is impious to entertain such feelings,” said Margarita.

“ Nay, I hope not,” replied Croiser. “ But even renouncing such a wish, though it would be wiser to quit mortality when so ethereal an emotion dies for ever within us, yet I conceive it to be such a pure emanation of the soul, that when blight or misfortune, or even death comes to annul it, the deep and holy glow remaining, is sufficient to consecrate and endear even the sorrows of a long old age ! You are both young, and formed to draw all hearts towards you—you will mix in the world—you will hear this condemned as illusive and fit only for the idle page of a romance. I too have mingled, it may be, in that same world till it has satiated me, until there is not a splendour or a glory to be found among its tinselled pages which does not excite my derision and disgust ! The world would teach your young hearts to renounce love ! What would it impart to you as a compensation for such a robbery ? Unmeaning laughter—hollow smiles, and far more bitter tears. Decorum without chastity, polish

without kindness, glare without happiness. Hypocrisy, ingratitude, and deceit ! Turn a deaf ear to the low ridicule which would assail the noblest of passions, and return their pointless jests with scorn. To be truly susceptible of love, does indeed require some impress of the Deity, and those never treated it as false or chimerical, whose souls were not too abject and abased to entertain a conception so sublime ! For the rest—they do but pursue the semblance of a shadow inadequate to fill the heart it vitiates,—like that unseen but mephitic and deadly exhalation, which to breathe is to expire !”

Croiser paused—and as Margarita turned to look on him with the transport which we feel towards those in whom the heart is deeply interested, she remarked the change of expression which showed how deeply he felt the bitterness his lips poured forth. It excited a painful curiosity. What could have imbued so young a spirit with so much acrimony ? One, too, who seemed not only to possess the warm affections of the heart, but absolutely to rest his chief hopes of happiness upon the enjoyment of them. What could it have been ? She had heard him speak of oppression, and that indeed can ruffle the most

tranquil spirit into wrath. A long pause ensued. The ductile spirit of Charlotte was instantly swayed by his arguments, she began to feel herself passionately attached, and to wonder what could have induced her to neglect such a conquest for the unknown Rannolini.

“Notwithstanding my concurrence in what you have just advanced,” resumed Margiée, “I cannot but think that there must be something idolatrous, and therefore wrong, in so intense an adoration of a fellow mortal as that you describe!”

“Never—the emotions are too widely separated. I grant that evil consequences have followed their emotion—but may it not rather be used as a means leading to the noblest ends! Such an attachment is, after all, but the poetry of the passion realized in life. Woman possessing such a lever on the mind of man, may, I grant, move him to his destruction—but is it not more philanthropic, more true, more just, towards your gentle sex, to suppose that she would be his guide in the pursuit of what is truly great, good, and happy? For the love of which I speak would select for its objects the unspotted in name or thought! The passion which attaches itself to aught beside can only have crime or indulgence for

its end, and is therefore self-excluded from our argument."

Margarita no longer looked up to contemplate the play of those features now so dear to her, the flush upon her cheek that went and came—her agitated frame that in the excess of her emotion scarcely moved, like waves suddenly stilled into inaction by the roar of cannon—the brilliancy of her fixed and half-closed eye; all bespoke how deeply those words had entered! It needed not the soft murmur falling from her lips. "It is too true," to reveal the inward workings of her mind. There, indeed, had his words quickened into life a dormant but cherished resolution. Surely thought she—"if love is to prove this resistless lever with any one, it must be so with him! He has professed to feel that passion for myself. Shall I—can I for an instant hesitate to use it in deterring him from the mad career in which I have too great reason to fear that he is embarked? I will not—I cannot fear to do so—nothing can be nobler than the saving a fellow-creature from crime and ruin! Neither could any object be worthier of such a redemption, or would repay it more—and who—oh who, so dear to me?"

As they now happened to be seated, Charlotte was leaning on her sister's neck behind Croiser; her hand had been clasped in Margiée's, and was lying beside it. Taking up the hand that he conceived to be Margarita's, Croiser pressed it to his lips. Great, however, was his surprize, when, after it was gently withdrawn, he discovered it to belong to Charlotte, who somewhat confused, now arose from her recumbent position. Surprised from his self-possession, he hurriedly bent towards her, saying "I beg your pardon, I thought it was the hand of —"

"Margiée" instantaneously interrupted Chatty filling up the pause which Croiser in his confusion had made—he endeavoured to explain—to say something—his lips moved, but were unequal to the task! Different feelings had the same effect on Charlotte—supporting herself on her arm, she seemed as if enchained in the act of rising, while her pallid countenance, as she gazed on him, betrayed amazement, rage, and scorn commingled, and formed a strange contrast with the usually pale but now crimsoned features of Margarita. Comprehending what had passed, she looked up, and confirmed the torturing suspicions which flashed through the mind of her sister. With

her natural acuteness and rapidity, Charlotte scanned the looks of both, saying to herself in a voice cool and distinct from extreme passion, "I see it all"; then springing up, was in another instant out of sight. Margarita alarmed and grieved at the agony which she well knew this stroke would occasion, attempted to follow, but overcome by the sensations that oppressed her, would have fallen to the ground but for the timely support of Croiser. As he tenderly upheld his lovely burden, he alternately blamed his own stupidity and the coquetry of Charlotte. Anxiously watching the first return of sensibility to that pale cheek now pillowed on his shoulder, he hastened to restore her to her own support, before she should be made sensible that she had been indebted for it to him. This delicacy did not escape Margarita, nor did she fail to appreciate it; for Croiser possessed much of that tact which distinguishes men accustomed to the ways of timid—gentle woman. He was well aware that the delicacy which sees no more than chance in such moments, will often win those endearing confidences denied to a less accomplished or more assuming lover.

Let us seek dear Chatty, Croiser," said Mar-

giée, and leaning on his arm, they hastened through the path by which she went. The first persons whom they encountered were Lady Sapphira, arm in arm with Bombast, accompanied by old Puff stumping after them, and fulfilling the office of body groom. By the side of the latter, resting on his cross headed stick, hobbled Jamie Maxwell, informing his wonderful and learned companion for the hundredth time, that "That castle, nae question, was biggit in the time o' Elizabeth, when the countrie was threatened to be harried wi' the Spanish Armada, wha put their trust in the scarlet abomination o' Babylon; and there was aye a big chain dra'ed up at sun down to keep in the ships, mere cockleshells in thae days compared wi' the floating clachans up the harbour, sae Adam Gordon aye tauld me, and he's muckle learning. Ye'll be minding Adam Gordon, sir, ye'll hae seen him at the"—the usual tale was here interrupted by the affected tones of Lady Sapphira.

"Dear me how bright *la Lune* looks to night! You must acknowledge, Captain Bombast, that you never saw a finer moonlight! No, not even in a foreign climate!"

"Oh dear, my lady, I beg your pardon, for when

I was at the Longbow Islands, one evening I was admiring that very planet as we might be now, my lady, and I happened to look full up without putting my hand across my forehead, and would you believe it, my lady, my eyes were so scorched that I couldn't see out of them for a week! Wasn't it so, Puff?"

"Very possibly so, Captain, indeed I may say exactly so, for you know I received your account of it in a letter dated three days after the accident—when I was abroad—at Cork."

"Indeed—ne—ver—knew—it!" drawled Lady Sapphira.

"Psha! you stupid—Puff," muttered Bombast in an undertone, "how could I write *three days after*, if I was blind for a *week*?"

"Ah, yes, weeks I meant—possibly yes. I'll correct myself"—then aloud, "Yes, my lady, dated three weeks after the deplorable accident!"

"Indeed, then most indubitably it must be very scorching! Does it not hurt the hair? Now I observe on the frontlet division of your encephalic extremity—you don't comprehend, I mean your forehead."

"Oh—chem—Ah, my lady, yes that happened about a week before. I was riding out a gale at

those islands—most tremendous hurricane—no abatement for three weeks—when as I was hailing the main-top, I incautiously lifted my hat off my head, when whiff, my lady, it blew all the hair off the front part of my head, and left me as bald as a coot, just as you see me now, my lady !”

“ Indeed—never knew—”

“ Can you tell me where my sister Charlotte is, Lady Sapphira ?” here interrupted Margarita.

“ No child, I don’t carry her about in my pocket ! But what’s the matter ? We past her on the battery just now, I thought she was crying ; but as I was saying, Captain Bombast——.” Margiée and Croiser hurried past this affected clod of inhumanity and conceit, as well as her congenial followers, and found Chatty, as her aunt had said, sitting on a gun carriage, her face leaning on the cold cannon, while the sea breeze gently lifting her dark locks, displayed her tears glistening on those curly tresses like diamonds from a mine, far richer than Golconde’s ! On Charlotte’s perceiving Croiser, she started up, and with a swiftness that baffled pursuit, fled to the house and secluded herself within her own room. Bitter and unjust were the reproaches she heaped upon poor Margiée ; it was in vain that the latter as-

serted that her sister's conduct with Rannolini, with the *, and even with Lord Falconer, had induced her to conclude that Croiser was indifferently esteemed by her. No; with all her admirable and amiable qualities, she was too headstrong to hear reason on such a point, and remained inflexible in her determination not to speak to either of the offending parties. This continued for two days, on the third Lord Falconer returned. The tides of our affections resemble other streams; driven out of one channel, they rush into another with redoubled impetuosity. Lord Falconer had brought in a little privateer as a prize, and was in high spirits. Now whether it was as Charlotte affirmed in excuse for her fickleness, that he looked far more handsome than heretofore, or whether it was that she had an innate love for a conquering hero, or whether, which I fear is the truer hypothesis, she was solely actuated by that love of change which doth somewhat sadly infest the better moiety of the creation, I will not decide; but certes she now took to her ill-treated adorer more kindly than ever she had done before, and he, too much delighted with the effects to enquire into the cause, played his part with all that gentle but warm and respectful attention so conspicuous in

his estimable character. She now forgave Croiser and Margiée, and harmony was once more restored.

In Croiser's mind one circumstance alone appeared to excite any uneasiness, or interrupt the calm happiness which he now enjoyed. This was the continued and increasing malady which had seized on the mind of Nathaniel. The illness under which Croiser had left him labouring, had soon brought on a relapse of an insanity, which had slightly showed itself some years before. Under the influence of this affliction he committed the most strange and unaccountable acts, which seemed to pain Croiser as much, if not more than any of the family. Seeing, however, that every kindness was paid to him, he could only hope with the suffering relations, that time would restore to him the noblest gift of God—unimpaired reason.

CHAPTER XI.

“The world’s a shadow! Vengeance sleeps,
The child of reason stands revealed;
When beauty pleads, when woman weeps,
He is not man who scorns to yield.”

HOGG.

IN the meanwhile our hero’s mind was at times distracted by the many opposing emotions that alternately arose within it. Now wisdom urged him to give up every thing to that love on which his happiness depended. Now honour demanded the fulfilment of those engagements by which he stood pledged to Rannolini. Then conscience awoke from her long trance, and held up principle and patriotism, spoke of treachery and crime, and hinted that Rannolini, by having the power, might be tempted into the fact of deceiving even Croiser! Then came that odious retrospective creature—prudence, demanding why he had ever exposed himself to an attachment

that wrought with it such perplexities? True, it was Rannolini who insisted on landing at Plymouth, as he knew the Port Admiral! and Destiny alone had arranged his rescuing them from starvation—but why did he pay so much attention? Why did he declare his love to her? Was he not bound in honour so to do, after being the unknown listener to her warm sentiments for him? As to his attentions—who could resist paying them to such a being? Say rather, why did he foolishly respect those fetters which bound him to Rannolini—that bound him to the chance of enslaving his country. For what?—a diadem that might be his or not—that might be independent or tributary!—in all probability the latter. And could he stoop thus—even to Rannolini? Never! Then there would be a rupture; and if so, why not now? Why not before he had stained a noble name with that dread title—the annihilator of his country's liberties? He, through whose assistance the arms of England were to succumb to those of France! But no, it was not for the paltry promised crown—he despised its tinsel and its glare. He was urged by a nobler passion—Revenge! He would live to crush those who would have trampled him to dust, and

then turn his back in sternest scorn upon them all. "Vengeance is mine," whispered the still small voice. And shall a mean mortal sprinkle his native country with the ashes of her finest cities, and bathe the land of his birth in the dearest blood of its inhabitants, to gratify a passion denounced by all laws, and condemned by his own conscience? Inaccessible as was Croiser's heart to aught like fear, his soul was not yet so dead to every just feeling, but that it shrunk back from so horrible a picture! Every thing swam around him—the mountains—the trees—the horizon of the sea—the heavens. He doubted—was this a dream—was this life a reality—the fiery flood propelled through his distracted breast—was it human? or such as circled through the frame of the fallen angel? Was he sober or intoxicated—sane or mad?—he saw no clue to guide him out of this fearful maze. Yes, there was death—suicide—there would at least be the self-consolation of having nobly sacrificed himself rather than act with dishonour to Rannolini, or with unnatural turpitude to the clime in which he first drew breath, in which his ancestors had been born, for which they had so nobly fought, from which they had won their noble name! He was

standing on a high promontory, the dark blue sea rolled beneath him. There must be rugged rocks a short way beneath its treacherously clear surface—it was but a leap—a moment's pang, and he was free. Claspings his hands over his forehead he stepped back, then sprung into the air. With vast rapidity his tall form descended—plunged into the waters, and disappearing in their bosom—sank.

In his maddened and impious resolution he had miscalculated—it was high tide—beneath the promontory from whence he leaped there was a deep chasm used by the smugglers to conceal their kegs, but was fortunately empty. Croiser merely struck the bottom sufficiently hard to arrest his impetus and cause his body to reascend. Being an excellent swimmer, he involuntarily floated, and the first thing which he fancied he heard on recovering his senses, was a female scream. “It must be Margarita’s.” She had not entered into the insane calculations of his last rash resolve. Was it possible that he could for a moment have forgotten her! It was enough. Her scream! His first impulse was to strike out for the shore and climb the rocks to find her. She was not to be seen—he shouted. She was not to be heard—it was fancy then, and

returning life, which had brought back to his remembrance her for whom alone it was dear. The plunge had cooled his burning brain, he now beheld his late act in its true colours, and to judge it even by the most worldly considerations, it implied a degree of cowardice foreign to his nature; to shun a danger merely because it appeared insurmountable.

Elevation of his spirits followed this unusual depression, and as he relapsed somewhat into his former views, he determined not to be swayed by shadows or dangers. "As for thee, dearest Margarita, little dost thou know who and what he is, thus daringly aspiring to thy love! But who could resist aspiring to such a boon? Let me enjoy this passing ecstasy while it is permitted to me, perhaps the last unsullied joy which is ever to fall to my lot on earth!" With this melancholy conclusion he hastened back to the house—entered unseen—changed his attire, and appeared at the dinner table with his usual composure. He soon found out that Margarita had been within doors throughout the morning, and that it was indeed but his fancy which had deemed her near him.

The meal over, they adjourned as usual to the

gardens, having ordered coffee and dessert to be served in the French pavilion. Hither Margarita, Charlotte, Croiser, and Falconer repairing, took their separate instruments, and amused themselves by having one of those delightful concerts which frequently afforded them an innocent delight, and formed an exquisite remembrance, to which some of those young hearts looked back from the embittered hours yet to come! When no particular piece of music was to be played, they were in the habit of choosing a subject and singing it in catches; each one taking it up, and improvising in turn—such was their fancies on the night in question.

Croiser was to take the first part, and he determined to vary it. A fountain, as the reader knows, played in this garden before the pavilion in which they were now seated. Advising them that he was about to commence an incantation, and giving to each their separate parts he commenced.

“ Gentle spirit who dost dwell
In thy many chamber'd shell,
There by day thy beauty hiding,
Or by night less coy abiding,
Where the Nympha's buds alone,
Close to form thy floating throne,

Whether buoyant on the wave,
There thy fairy court thou'rt ruling,
Or in mimic seas dost lave,
Limbs that court the zephyrs cooling,
Spirit of the bubbling fount,
Bid thy waters cease to mount ;
Cease to mount and cease to fall,
Hear thy lovely mistress call !”

As the soft intonations of Croiser's voice gradually subsided, the jet of water almost imperceptibly fell, until its gentle dripping on the huge shells beneath, was no longer heard, when the last singer motioning to Margarita, she took up the dying strain :

“ Spirit rise and tell us when
Hearts that love shall meet again ?”

To this Charlotte replied as the fountain played again :

“ When the dews once more descending,
Lull the balmy flowers to rest,
Lovers' sighs and vows are blending,
Maids are kind and youths are blest !
Thus I wake and tell thee when
Hearts that love shall meet again.”

Then Falconer :

“ Yet—yet, rise revealing where
Shall hearts thus true, meet forms so fair !

Here the jet sank a little as Croiser replied
sotto voce.

" Here within these sacred bowers,
 Where youth and loveliness have made
 Fleeting joys of ling'ring hours,
 To consecrate each shade !
 Here within these spicy groves
 Where perfume fills each spot,
 Whose hallow'd glades by him who roves
 May never be forgot !
 Further may I not disclose,
 See the thirst-expiring rose
 Asks my fall's refreshing dew,
 To bloom as roseate as you !
 Still the lily joins the pray'r,
 Fearing thou wilt seem more fair,
 While flow'rets all now hail the night,
 Envyng eyes that shine so bright !
 Further may I not disclose,
 Fairest mistress, grant repose ! "

Charlotte :—

" Yet, oh yet, one last request,
 Yield to this inquiring breast !
 Who shall part ? and who shall stay !
 Spirit of the waters, say ! "

Croiser :—

" Ah ! beware thy silv'ry tongue,
 Darkly frown the weards on high,
 Pity one so fair, so young ;
 Seeks through folds of fate to pry.
 Stay the joys that fleetly leave thee,
 Bright as soars the god of morn ;
 Orient hues may yet deceive thee,
 Eve yet find thee wan and lorn !
 Longer thus I must not dwell,
 Think and ponder—Fare thee well
 Further may I not disclose :
 Waters rise, and sprite repose."

As the fountain rushed once more with full force into its accustomed channel, and rose silvering in the moonlight, a low moan caused by some fissure in the jet, mingled mournfully with the last cadence of the music. All were startled at this unexpected sound—its note of tender melody hung on the ear, and lent a reality to the mimic enchantment which they had been feigning—it was but momentary—and yet when it died away, it seemed to have sunk into the heart of each as a fit resting-place, and harmonized strangely with the ominous and foreboding impromptu with which Croiser had concluded—a gloom came over them—they tried to rally themselves but in vain, and rising, they sought another part of the gardens.

Thus day after day passed in a sort of dreamy and exquisite delight, Margarita and Croiser constantly together, riveting the golden fetters which already bound them so fast: he, still undetermined as to the ultimate course he should pursue, but meanwhile fulfilling his duty to Rannolini, by forwarding all the instructions relative to the British fleets, which he was now desired to obtain. As for Margiée herself, she endeavoured in vain to pierce the mystery which surrounded

him, while every succeeding hour proved her affections to be less and less under her own controul.

After all, reason is but an adjunct, and the leading events of life are, I am inclined to think, in other hands—so at least it proved to be in this instance. It was on the day before Margarita's birth-day, that Croiser retired to his room to write. His first duty was to prepare a despatch for Rannolini, which, as he was secure in the mode of sending it, was not in cypher. This finished, he composed some lines for Margarita, on the occasion of the following day. He had hardly finished committing them to paper, and was reading them over, when he was summoned to the dinner table. Hastily putting his papers into his desk, he descended. Some officers were dining with the Port Admiral on that day, and the meal was unusually prolonged. When freed from this restraint, Croiser, impatient to join the sisters, went to his room in the dusk, hurriedly snatched out the paper for Margarita, and made the best of his way to the gardens.

Having presented this little remembrance to her with a few words suitable to the occasion, they passed the evening together as usual, until the family separated for repose. On gaining her

room, Margiée's first act was to draw forth from her bosom the cherished billet—that anticipated source of delight. She read, and as she read, each faint hope, as to the desperate schemes in which her beloved Croiser was embarked, vanished—like shapes of empty air. In the dark, owing to the inconsiderate haste he had used, he drew forth from his desk the despatch for Rannolini instead of the lines addressed to Margarita, and the former was now in her hands. It had been purposely written in that brief and concise style which Rannolini so much admired; but short as it was, it gave a key to all that Croiser most wished to conceal, and therefore in effect it revealed the whole; while she was acquainted with its contents, almost before she understood that she was reading what was not intended for her eye! Could she believe her senses? If so, she had it under Croiser's own hand that he was in league with Rannolini to render the arms of France triumphant in England—her worst suspicions were confirmed! Her agitation on perusing the fatal paper was so excessive, that Charlotte remarked it, and begged to be made acquainted with its contents, but Margarita was too faithful to her lover to think of such a disclosure. Once, indeed, the question

flashed through her mind, " Was she not bound to discover such plans to her father?" but the remembrance of the manner in which she became acquainted with them, determined her to support the dreadful secret, unaided and alone.

During the restless night of torture which she passed, a thousand disjointed images of misery and horror presented themselves before her; at length she came to the resolution of communicating to Croiser all that had passed, of laying before him all the enormity of the act he was about to commit, adjuring him, by the passion he professed to feel for her, to abandon the horrid league, or finally to renounce her for ever.

On the next morning, on which her birth-day was to be celebrated, she appeared in the breakfast-room more than ordinarily pallid, from the conflict of the preceding night. She had no sooner entered the saloon, than she felt on the point of sinking to the ground—the first object that her glance encountered was Croiser. He was standing near the fire-place, his arms folded on his breast, as she had so often seen Rannolini stand. The swart hue of his countenance was mingled with a deadly and unusual pallor, and his eye was fixed on her with an expression that made

her tremble. She had often admired its deep meaning, its tenderness, its dignity, its sternness—but never till now had she seen it thus bent on herself—probing as it were the inmost recesses of her soul! She could almost fancy it was Rannolini himself, stripped of so many summers, and standing there in the extreme freshness of youth.

Croiser read her mind at a glance, and though he beheld the truth, he also beheld the woman whom he loved, trembling before him. Masking his own feelings beneath his usual composure, he advanced, gave her his support, and after tendering in a low tremulous voice the compliments of the day, seated himself by her side at the table.

When they arose, Croiser requested the favour of a few minutes' private conversation, and giving her his arm, he led the way to the sisters' parlour, where he was secure from all interruption, as Charlotte had scampered off with Lord Falconer to ride Marengo. Croiser felt the delicate arm now resting on his own, tremble violently as they traversed the short space dividing the breakfast-room from the boudoir. "Compose yourself, dear Margarita," said he, as they reached the room. Closing the door, he seated himself beside her on the sofa, and gave her a smelling-bottle

that was lying on the table before them. Twice he attempted to speak, but in vain. He arose and walked to the window. There in calm repose he beheld that beautiful and varied view of wood and water, which he might shortly be doomed to quit for ever! For a few minutes he paced the apartment in silence, then pausing opposite to Margarita, said, "I believe, dear Margiée, I gave you a paper last night?"

"Yes."

"Well, I fear it was not the one intended for you. May I ask where it is?"

"It is here, Croiser"—drawing it forth with a tremulous grasp, and presenting it to him, but not daring to look up at the person she addressed.

"Hah!" glancing over it and speaking with a feigned composure. "Yes, this is it! Have you read it, Margarita?"

"Dearest Croiser, forgive me!"—seizing his hand and pressing it towards her. "Forgive me, in the confusion of the moment, and little suspecting what were its contents, I did read it—there was no superscription—the tenor of its contents alone informed me that it was for Rannolini."

"Then you know all."

“All.”

“And to how many have you communicated your knowledge?”

“To none. O believe me, not to a single soul!”

“That is well! Remember, Margarita, you obtained this knowledge, I may say, in a confidential manner, and therefore, you ought still to regard it in that light.”

“I do, Croiser, and I always will.”

“Hold it secret and sacred on your word of honour, as a woman—as a lady—as my affianced bride?”

“As a woman, as a lady—I do indeed pledge my secrecy, however painful, on my word of honour, but as your affianced bride—No! Croiser, never!”

“Not as my affianced bride—why, Margarita, what fickleness is this?” he demanded in a sterner tone than she had ever heard him assume before.

“Fickleness, Croiser?” returned Margarita, in a voice scarcely articulate from the grief that struggled at her heart—“how imperfectly do you know me! My feelings towards you remain unchanged, but alas, in what a different light do you now stand before me? I will be candid with

you, for deceit would sit but poorly on one so unaccustomed to use it. If in what I am going to say, anything should drop from my lips which womanly reserve would condemn—forgive it—forget it—attribute it to the confusion of a moment, that seems to confound everything save the dreadful sense of existence. When I first met you, Croiser, we were strangers, and I was happy in the calm of unawakened emotion. It would be a mockery, a deceit foreign to my nature, to say I did not admire you. But as a stranger wrapt in mystery, I would not allow myself to do more. It was ordained otherwise; twice you were destined to be the preserver of my life; and alas, you too well know that we were thrown much together, when peril softens and commingles those hearts that mutually encounter it. I must have been inanimate, if your kind attention had not made an impression on me—insensible, if your merits had not awakened my regard—ungrateful, if I had treated my preserver with affected coldness,—and unwomanly, if I had not—must I say it?”—bursting into tears and hiding her face on his shoulder, as he sat by her side,—“yes, unwomanly, if I had not *loved* you!”

Croiser attempted to speak, but what remained

for him to say on hearing such a confession? He was still more bitterly affected than herself, and could only kiss the forehead that leaned on him for support—as she continued—“perhaps you think it unmaidenly to say so much; alas, it is only what accident has revealed to you before—but to proceed. It was now too late to be prudent, to ask, to consider who you were. Accident, I say, discovered my affection to you—you professed to return it.”

“I do, I do, Margarita,—if there is either truth or love on earth.”

“I believe you, Croiser, I did believe you—my confidence is a proof of it, and I was too happy, ever to examine the suspicions that floated before me as narrowly as I should have done. I confided in your honour that you never would win my esteem and affections if your pursuits were such as would bring odium on myself or family.”

“Nay, do not blame me here, Margarita, though each thought—wish—feeling—were bound up in you, I never would have disclosed it, had not circumstances demanded in honour—”

“You need say no more—true! Too true! it was *my* fault—I alone am to blame.”

“ I have not said so, dearest Margarita. I do not for an instant think it.”

“ Then it is worse, for *I* think so of myself—but the past is irreparable—I will not dissemble—I can only repeat to you that though my heart, my affections—all that I had to give were granted to the mysterious and unknown Captain Croiser,—never shall my hand be bestowed on the avowed renegade to patriotism, whose talents and energies are to be devoted to the overthrowing of his country, and the subjugation of his native land under a foreign dominion! No,” lifting her head from its late pillow, and drawing herself up somewhat proudly, while the curl round her red lips bespoke a widely different feeling from that shown by her large and soft hazel eye overflowing with tears, “ though in the weakness of my breast—I cannot cease to be a woman, yet in principle, in honour, in firmness of purpose I cannot, I will not forget to be a Salisbury.”

“ And I also”—said Croiser, starting up somewhat abruptly,—then as if suddenly recollecting himself, his head dropped on his breast, as he presently continued in a low but wild and incoherent tone, “ And *am* I then to lose you—Margarita—

for ever?—for ever? Do I live to contemplate it? Do I exist to utter it? Are you to fade from my eyes like a bright and unearthly vision of the night, that will not stand the test of morning?—Why did I love you?—Fool—Madman! Oh, could I but crush my heart and feelings at once, or tear it from my bosom for ever, how gladly—Say—say—speak for the love of mercy, Margarita, am I to renounce you for ever?”

“It depends upon yourself.—Give up Rannolini and his impious schemes, and I am yours to-morrow—pursue them, and we are severed to all eternity.”

“Heavens! let me keep my reason!—You are ignorant to what your demand extends. Every thing binds me to Rannolini—my word—my honour—my truth—my gratitude, the impulses of my heart. My future fame depends upon the fulfilment of my pledges! But why should I be swayed by woman’s tears, and let you work my heart into a greater state of softness than you yourself are capable of feeling.—Go,—you have deceived me—you have deceived yourself. Charlotte’s is not the only heart of sand in the family. Go, I say, you have only been toying with your own affections as well as mine. You will forget

me in a few days—you have not loved me or you could not thus have wrung my heart by asking this at my hands !”

“ Well—well may you pray to Heaven for your reason, Croiser !” replied the agonized Margarita, bursting into a fresh flood of tears, and covering her face with her hands as she bowed her head on the opposite side of the couch to that on which he sat, “ since you must surely have been deprived of it, before you could think—reason—argue—speak like this !” Then suddenly turning round as if to make one determined effort, she parted back the disordered tresses that half obscured her lovely countenance, and laying her hand on his arm, continued with all the persuasive eloquence of woman in distress, “ You say your future hopes of fame are built upon this scheme ?—You say I do not love you ? Why—why, Croiser, will you ungenerously compel me to reiterate this unfeminine—this unmaidenly declaration, I do love you,” bending down her brow to conceal the blush that suffused it, as he arose from her side and hurriedly paced the room. “ I love you to intensity—you do—you *must* know it ; and while I confess it as a claim upon your consideration, I feel ashamed of the weakness that holds me in such a thrall,—but

think—think, dearest Croiser—How can I continue to love the apostate to his country?”

“That apostate I am now, Margarita!” he replied in a slow solemn voice, suddenly turning round and facing her.

“Alas, you are!” she resumed; “but granting even that—even that I am so far degraded—can I love the traitor, the worse than traitor, the son who battles to subdue his parent country?—or still more low, supposing that I cannot wean my heart from the spells which you have thrown around it, do you deem so slightly of my virtue as to imagine that I will wed the betrayer of my native land?—I were not worth possessing if I would—even you yourself, ought—nay, would despise me! If otherwise, cheat not yourself with such a belief, never dream that I will stoop to it, for hear me swear”—

“Swear not—I beseech you!”

“Yes, Croiser, I will, I do vow by that imperishable love which you have drawn from my bosom against the better dictates of my reason, I will never become the bride of one who can contemplate the overthrow of her to whom he owes a prior allegiance, his mother earth. Your fame?—Think, Croiser, think what fame can ever accrue to you from planting on the soil of England the

standard of her deadliest enemy? For the love of Heaven, do not believe Rannolini! Croiser, he will only break the promises made to you, and infamy, eternal infamy alone will descend on him who betrays to spoil and desolation all that patriots hold most dear—that name which I have so fondly cherished, this will be its portion!—Think! think what my father would feel if he knew whom he had harboured, and the character of him who would become his son-in-law!” Croiser drew back and seemed to shudder at the idea. Margarita watched the slight advantage she had gained, and hastened to pursue it. “I have no bribes to offer—no alluring alternatives to hold out; but if ever there was any truth in your repeated vows, if ever there was any meaning in your assertions, that love would repay the sacrifice of all beside, I call upon you now to renounce this unnatural project, whether urged by vengeance, interest, or other feeling. Yes, I call upon you by your own unrefuted arguments, which declared the pursuit of ambition or glory as mere shadows compared with the attainment of an affection worthy of the human heart! Surely you will not break in practice the rule you so ably support in theory. It remains for you to prove by your conduct, whether you do

esteem me as truly as you have professed, or whether you will give me up, to pursue a plan impious towards God, guilty towards man, dishonourable to yourself, and ruinous to all! For the sake of every thing, do not persist, but rather allow yourself to be persuaded by one, who, being without the vortex in which you are whirled, can more properly point out the course you ought to pursue!"

Croiser paused. His quick and hurried pace slackened, he turned towards her, and then, as if afraid that so much beauty might lead him against his better judgment, placed his hands over his eyes, exclaiming in a low broken voice, "Alas! what a moment of agony is this? While every feeling of ambition, of injured pride, wrongs unredressed, and retaliation yet to come—all that I have ever—perhaps erroneously—deemed it ennobling to regard, now urge me to fulfill my engagements to Rannolini—Love, ay, and some innate feeling stronger, though less loud, proclaim that she is right! What to me, without her love, would be the empire of half his sway? What, even the crown with which he would lure me on! Too truly I feel she would execute all she says. Again, the thousand chances which militate against

my independence, when once under his thrall ! I may indeed not be able even to preserve, much less increase, the liberties of my country ! Did I but really think I was about to enslave her, despite of every obstacle, the honoured blood within my veins would prove rebellious to such a deed. Yet have I not reasoned on it for the last six months of my life incessantly ? and shall a woman's mere tears and timid argument do what all my principle, suspicion, and misgivings have failed to effect ? Psha !—Margarita,” addressing her aloud—“ It is in vain ! You cannot argue on this case, since you are unacquainted with its details, and your view of it is too partial. I tell you once more, you have but deceived yourself. I know the human heart—I know the nature of woman too well, and the precise state of your feelings too exactly, to be blinded by the sophistry which has deluded yourself. I defy you to renounce me ! If by that word you mean to abjure all affection for me, and let forgetfulness assume the place of love !”—

“ Doubtless !” replied Margarita, drying up her tears, and not a little stung at the unkind sentiment Croiser's last speech contained. “ You are better skilled in these arts than myself—it may be

as you say, but I will effectually prevent any relentings——this letter,” pulling forth a packet, “contains—an—an offer——I shall request six months from this day to consider the proposal. If by that time you are not pleased to claim my previous pledge to you, declaring your present scheme and connexion with Rannolini entirely abandoned——every thing will be irrevocably past between us. You will find me the bride of another! I will not conceal from you, that such a bridal will but prove the first step towards my grave——yet if it is ordered, it shall be so—I must—I must prefer a broken heart to a sullied name.” The last word was but an hysteric sob, and overcome by her unusual exertion, she sank upon the sofa——then recovering herself, arose, and was about to withdraw. Yet she could not leave him thus——she hesitated——paused in her way to the door, and looking back, beheld him leaning for support on the mantel, seemingly stupified with sorrow. A fresh gush of tears burst from her, as she held out her hand. Rushing towards her, he snatched a passionate embrace, but gently disengaging herself, she said, as plainly as her extreme agitation would permit——“I must remain firm. God bless you, dearest Croiser! Pray Heaven to di-

rect you in your determination, and we may yet meet again in happiness!" In another instant she had passed away, leaving him speechless with woe, and gazing on her retreating figure with a wild vacant stare. Within twenty-four hours he was at sea once more—distracted, maddened, questioning whether the world around was actual life, or the hideous phantasmagoria of a diseased dream.

CHAPTER XII.

“ Now sad foreboding bids the heart despair.”

GILLMAN.

THE assertion made by Margarita to Croiser respecting an offer, was as she had stated. It came from Charles Pendervis, a gentleman of large property in Cornwall, who sat for his own borough in St. Stephen's. Some twelve months before, he had proposed for her hand to Sir Richard; but the old officer being indifferent as to whom his daughters married, provided their choice fell on those calculated to make them happy, saw nothing to which he objected in this wealthy suitor, and therefore referred the matter at once to Margiée. She, however, could see no resemblance in Mr. Charles Pendervis to the being so often imaged out in her romantic day-dreams, and therefore requested her father to reply that she was as yet too young for the consideration of such an engagement.

As the frequent prizes which Sir Richard had

made during his long service, left no doubt of his possessing great wealth, the beauty of the co-heiresses had been sounded throughout the surrounding counties. Nowise disheartened, therefore, by the first evasion of his proposal, Mr. Pendervis waited the issue of a year and then renewed his suit, but without thinking it necessary to do so through the medium of her father. Margarita received his letter on the same evening that Croiser's fatal mistake put her in possession of his secret; but having read the former, some hours before the latter, she had decided on sending a direct refusal. Circumstances changed her determination. Irritated by Croiser's humiliating assertion that she was unable to give him up, she produced the letter and asserted that, sooner than depart from which, she would have died.

We will pass over the week that succeeded Croiser's departure—the bitter self-reproaches, misgivings, doubts, and fears which she experienced—the deep dejection that followed her unusual agitation, and the low fever of the spirits that preyed upon her gentle heart. If my reader has ever known—and I fear there are few in existence who have not—the sorrows of vain retrospection, the slow but withering grief of seared affection, then imagination and

memory will vividly pourtray the conflict that struggled in Margarita's bosom.

We will now return to Charlotte. With her usual warm-hearted inconsistency, she resumed her old command over the affections of Lord Falconer, and appeared by her present kindness, to have determined on making full reparation for all past neglect. This went on very smoothly for some time, when the sudden arrival of the *'s ship, put to flight all his lordship's dreams of reciprocal feeling on her part. With a most culpable levity, she instantly deserted Falconer who had so often proved himself sincerely attached to her, for one whom she knew could only prove an acquaintance of the hour, since the wide distance between their ranks in life, forbade any thing beyond a mere flirtation.

Galled and enraged as Falconer naturally was, he internally vowed to be no longer made her plaything and convenience, and resolved on instantly making interest to be sent on a foreign station. In the mean while, however, a despatch arrived one evening for the Port Admiral. He happened to be out of the way, and the packet was laid on his table. Charlotte entering in one of her merry moods, broke it open, relying for pardon on

the ease with which she always managed ‘Bunting-main.’ The enclosed letter, after going on to state that a French squadron was reported to have sailed from Rochfort for Scilly, ordered Sir Richard to despatch the *Phœbe* frigate to reconnoitre, as that vessel was now lying in the roadstead.

Now Charlotte had been hoping ever since the *’s return that some duty might take Falconer off to sea once more, and leave her at liberty. “Good, this will do!” thought she, and without giving herself a moment to reflect, she took up a pen and turned the final letter *e* into *us*, making the name of the frigate appear to be *Phœbus*—the ship that Falconer commanded. Nothing was suspected, Sir Richard showed the order, and Lord Falconer sailed on the ensuing morning.

Absorbed as Margarita now was with her own grief, she could yet afford a moment to that of others, and her sister’s conduct to his lordship gave her great pain. She had always admired and esteemed him as a friend, had shared his confidence and supported his suit with Chatty, she now, therefore, ventured to take the * aside, and after representing to him the inutility at least, of carrying on a flirtation with Charlotte, related the exact situation of Falconer with respect to her sister, dwelt on the

sincere feelings entertained by the latter, and his various qualifications likely to contribute to Charlotte's happiness, and finally gave it as her opinion that if the * were not at hand to occasion her inconsistent conduct, she would obey the dictates of her just reason, and give a favourable hearing to one who so well deserved it of her. With the generous character of the *, this was enough; he regretted his having been so long in ignorance of the facts, and declared his purpose of withdrawing himself at once, so as not to thwart the happiness he was unable to enjoy. He remained faithful to his word, and once more Charlotte found herself alone. Little troubled as she generally was with remorse, she now felt unaccountably oppressed. A sense of "ills to come" constantly haunted her mind. Long dormant attachment seemed to spring up in her fickle breast with the absence of its object. Her conscience told her how sillily she had behaved, and how unkindly she had treated him, and while she vowed by her future conduct to dispel all remembrance of such folly, something impressed upon her mind that the hour for such an atonement had for ever past away. Imbued with this melancholy idea, she

was sitting one evening in the French pavilion, the twilight was on the point of giving way to night, and the moon having waned into its last quarter, did not rise till late. Her lute was in her hands, which were straying over its chords, as if, to use the beautiful idea of Moore, "in search of some lost air." The gentle murmuring of the fountain, as it fell through the perfumed air, increased the mournful solemnity of her mind, and wooed her to repose. She did not, however, sleep, but was merely indulging in that delicious and dreamy state of quiescence which we feel to be so exquisite, when the tender associations of past years return all freshly upon us, and the inward eye beholds the bright but sad and illusive bloom with which the waste of memory is decked. She heard a slight rustling of the trees. "It is a footstep," thought she. Presently a figure passed before the trellised window of the left-hand room, where she was sitting. She thought it singular, as the approach was from the opposite side of the garden, but she distinctly saw through the foliage of the passion flower, a human figure pass, and one which she thought she knew. She looked towards the door in expectation of seeing it enter. In another second it stood on the threshold, and

My friend called at the house in the morning

her pulse beat wildly as she recognised it to be Lord Falconer. She attempted to speak, but could not. She waited for him to enter, but he remained stationary, and seemed to proffer some small casket for her acceptance—by its form a miniature. His dress was disarranged, his hair seemed to have lost its curl, his countenance appeared wan and ghastly, and wore an expression of deep grief and pain, while his eyes were dim and sunk. “Dear Falconer!” cried Charlotte, springing into his arms. Alas! she clasped but the empty air, and fell heavily to the ground. Terrified, she arose—shouted his name, begged him to amuse himself no longer at her expense, if such he meant it, and come to her. But to her cries no sound replied save that of the fountain falling near. She searched the garden round, but could not discover the slightest clue to unravel the extraordinary scene she had witnessed. She ran into the adjoining garden, and in her way met Jamie; but to all her rapid queries only received the consolatory question in reply,

“Ye’re no’ for thinking its ane o’ the brownies, are ye, Miss Charlotte?” Then seeing her continue her flight without an answer, “Na, na, I

canna think a'thegither it's ane o' them mysel—ye dinna see the gude creatures in sic an outlandish place as this—they're aye ower canny to leave bonny Scotland."

Charlotte next met Margarita, who impressed with her own sad thoughts, was musingly wandering on the terraces commanding the sea. Margiée, after hearing her story, and aiding her in a short but fruitless search, endeavoured to persuade Chatty that it must have been a dream, or one of those strange unaccountable illusions which are so often presented to us between sleeping and waking. But Charlotte was firm in her conviction that every thing had taken place as it has been described here, and would not, therefore, give up one tittle of her belief, though she enjoined Margiée not to mention it in the house.

Charlotte's forebodings were now confirmed, no arguments, no reasoning of her sister, could persuade her that she had not seen some supernatural appearance, and still less could she be convinced that it did not foretell something dreadful connected with Falconer. Impressed with this belief, she spent the day in wandering over the various heights in the grounds; and ascended once or

twice to the top of Maker Tower, anxious yet dreading to descry the approach of some vessel, which would resolve her fears.

It was on the second evening after the strange appearance in the French garden, that she rose from the dinner-table, and strolled down the avenue before the house. The time that elapsed, had sufficed for a slight reaction in her feelings—she was beginning to think that it might have been the result of overwrought imagination, and to hope that all would yet go well, when she saw a seaman hurrying up towards her from the entrance-gate. “What is the matter, my good man?” said she, addressing him.

“Why—may it please your ladyship,” responded the tar, touching his hat, “the * has just come in, and he’s a sent me with a bit of a sealed despatch to the Port Admiral.”

“The *, eh?—and where is this sealed despatch?”

“Oh! please your ladyship, I had strict orders not to give it to nobody whatsoever, ’septin Sir Richard.”

“Yes, yes, I know—I am his daughter, it’s all the same, I’ll give it to him!”—snatching from his hand the packet which he had produced from

his hat. "There now—go up to the house, and they'll give you something to drink"—knowing this to be the shortest method of silencing a sailor's objections.

Not daring to make any further inquiry until she had read the letter, which some innate conviction asserted to be concerning herself, she saw the seaman turn reluctantly away, and then tore the seal. It enclosed a letter from the *, and a small round packet: the former was for the hand of Sir Richard, and ran as follows:—

"H. M. S. Phœbe, August 20, 18—

"DEAR SIR,

"Having put to sea agreeably to the arrangement entered into at our last meeting, our attention was, on the eighteenth ultimo, attracted by a distant cannonade.

"Hastening to make all sail in the apparent direction, in the course of an hour we came up with H. M. ship Phœbus engaging L'Egyptien, a double banked French frigate of sixty-four guns. No time being lost in lying my ship on the disengaged side of the enemy, I found the Phœbus a complete wreck, and so much injured by the heavy fire of such a superior force, as to be in immediate danger of sinking.

“ After a brisk cannonade of twenty minutes, in which we were most gallantly seconded by the *Phœbus*, I had the honour of boarding *L’Egyptien* on the starboard bow, and carrying her.

“ While delighted, sir, at having such a theme on which to dwell, I feel it utterly impossible to do justice to the determined daring and gallantry of the officers and crew of the frigate which we have had the pleasure of assisting. In an action of an hour and forty minutes she sustained a loss of no less than sixty men killed, and ninety-seven wounded, nine of her guns dismounted, and her masts entirely shot away.

“ Although congratulating my country on the issue of this action, I cannot but deeply deplore the loss she has sustained in the person of Captain Lord Falconer, through whose undaunted bravery and skill the honour of the British flag was so gloriously upheld. While on the point of laying my ship alongside the enemy, I beheld him fall upon his own forecastle, heading his men in person to repel boarders. He survived to know that we were successful, and expired in my arms at forty minutes past eight, P.M., having been almost senseless since he received his wound from a musket ball in the side.

“ It being reported to me that the *Phœbus* was in a sinking state, I caused the removal of all her wounded on board my ship, as well as the remaining part of her crew, together with such stores as we could save.

“ Unable to give to his lordship a nobler tomb than the vessel he had so daringly defended, I caused the more vital organs to be hastily imbalmed, and having laid out his body, secured it to the quarter deck. We then disposed around his person the brave men who fell under his orders, and read the funeral service of the church of England over their bodies. At a quarter past nine she went down with her noble dead, when, by previous arrangement, we were enabled to fire a broadside over him, as well from the prize as from my own ship.

“ I cannot refrain from mentioning to you, in terms of high admiration, the conduct of the French commander, M.M. Detrousset; he has done all that ability and bravery could suggest for the honour of his country. His loss in dead amounts to one hundred and forty-one. He had on board a detachment of chasseurs—the * * demi-brigade. This ship is one of the best equipped which I have ever seen from the ports

of France. They pointed out to me the body of the *enseigne de vaisseau*, by whose shot Lord Falconer fell—his body was pierced with not less than a dozen bullets.

“ I have ordered copies to be drawn out for you, both of the *Phœbus*’s log for the action, which was saved, as well as that of my own. They shall be forwarded without delay. I am now awaiting your orders, with my prize, in the Sound. I have to regret the loss of twenty of the best of my crew, besides wounded, and to subscribe myself,

“ Dear Sir,

“ With all respect,

“ Your most obedient to command,

“ * * * .”

“ To Sir Richard Salisbury, Admiral of the White,
Port Admiral of Plymouth.”

“ P. S.—(Private.)

“ Poor Falconer caused the enclosed packet to be taken from his desk in my presence. He put it into my hands, whispering something in my ear, in which I could only distinguish the name of Miss Charlotte Salisbury. Seeing that was the direction it bore, I said I would deliver it; he seemed satisfied, and finding himself unable to

articulate, closed his eyes, and shortly afterwards expired. Under the peculiar circumstances of the case I thought I had better enclose it to you. I cannot tell you how gallantly he behaved! In fact, they all fought like devils, and were attached to him beyond every thing. When they think of him and their old ship being sunk, which contains so many of their dead messmates and friends, it is as much as I can do to keep them from ill-treating their prisoners. If you could only have seen us standing on the shattered decks of the sinking Phœbus, reading the prayers over his body! Of all the faces thronging around, begrimed with smoke and blood, I do do not believe that the battle-lantern which enabled me to read, could have displayed three unmoistened with tears.

“ Shortly after we had finished our melancholy task, and had left the Phœbus to settle down, the moon rose, and a slight breeze springing up, we drifted some short distance to leeward of the wreck. From the time of the last boat’s pulling off, the crews of both ships thronged the ports and bulwarks to watch the final catastrophe. As the moon had risen on the opposite side we had an excellent view of the poor riddled hull. She

lay, a dark, motionless, and ruined log in the middle of the silver rays playing on the waters, while here and there we were able to catch glimpses of the light as it came streaming through the ports and innumerable shot-holes. The only sign of aught like life on board her, was the gentle waving of her blackened and tattered ensign in the night breeze, sweeping over the pallid cheeks of some seventy of the bravest hearts in Christendom, doomed never more to feel its freshness or rejoice in the health it brought. Suddenly she heeled over on one side, and the moon-beam unobstructed shot along the continuous surface of the sea, which had received the Phœbus in its bosom. We immediately fired our broadsides over the vacant space, and after a few moments spent in vain and useless regrets, that our comrades could not share our victory, I ordered the men to their task of refitting. Poor Falconer—his was a noble heart indeed!”

Charlotte read this sad letter to the end, it is true, but from among all the details which it related, her mind only comprehended one fact—that Falconer, driven to sea by her levity and trickery, had perished!—like a hero it was true, but by a violent death, while in dying he had remem-

bered her! In the wildest agony she tore open the packet superscribed with her name. It contained the miniature of herself, which she had formerly given to him, and in its case was folded a little billet, dated the night before the action, with the following memorandum and lines.

“ Half past ten.—It is calm, a strange sail, evidently French, has been seen in the south-west, for the last eight hours. She shows no disposition to attack us, and is to all appearance too large for us to attack; the men, however, have come aft to refuse their grog, and have declared that if they are unworthy to fight the King’s battles, they are unworthy to drink a seaman’s allowance. I have promised to take them into action to-morrow. I have a presentiment that I shall fall. Pray Heaven that it may be instant death—he who has ceased to love, or worse, to be beloved, can no longer have aught to fear or to regret. Hope still gilds the future, though misfortune has clouded all the past; but there is a moment when Hope becomes credulity, and expectation vain indeed.

TO CHARLOTTE.

HAVE we loved but to sever in sorrow ?

Have I worshipped to meet with thy scorn ?

Can the plight vowed at eve, on the morrow

Evanish like dew-drops at morn ?

When their freshness and spirit exhaling,
Relinquish the buds to decay,
And riflers—their odours regaling—
Pollute but to flutter away.

My soul is too weak to forget thee,
My heart is too fond to condemn,
Yet the parasite crew that beset thee,
Though fulsome will learn to contemn.

Thy breast if not seared, will it slumber ?
Or slumb'ring no mem'ry awake,
To ask mid the hearts which you number
As conquered, how many you break ?

Yes, ask if the ceaseless devotion
I gave whilst my spirit was free,
Deserves that each trembling emotion
Should meet with such falsehood from thee ?

In my bosom, that scene of contention,
Still fondness will struggle with shame,
To cancel each slavish retention,
And brand every thought of thy name !

To that name can I now turn with anger ?
'Tis false, though remembrance is sore !
And breathed in a moment of danger,
Impels to destruction the more !

Thou hast triumph'd, and yet I forgive thee,
Thou hast trampled—I banish the thought ;
If thy conquest one transport could give thee,
Too dear is the ruin thou'st wrought.

Thou hast gloried in viewing each fetter,
My bondage was pleasing to see,
Though disgraceful to me, it were better
Than proving ungrateful to thee !

Though now recollection be madness,
And thought can but harrow my breast,
Compassion still mingles with sadness,
And all that I wish thee, is—rest !

Though the arms of another approach thee,
Though the lips of a stranger shall woo,
Fear not that my heart shall reproach thee,
If the pulse of his own be as true.

Yes, my soul is too weak to forget thee !
Too foolishly fond to condemn,
To recall, is, alas ! to regret thee,
I love thee, yet fain would contemn !

The above lines, though occasionally wanting in exact poetical versification, yet bespoke the struggle between tender passion and the pride of a slighted affection with which his bosom was torn. The few reproaches it contained, fell with redoubled weight on Charlotte from her being conscious of having deserved them ! Still, had he known the effect they would produce, his would never have been the hand to pen them. Remorse now struck her home ! All her former tricks and follies returned to goad her afresh. She viewed herself as his murderer, and urged by despair and the revulsion of her own kind feelings, she rushed along she knew not whither ! Night was closing in—the dew struck her damp and chill—the sky was overcast, and the south-east wind, as it

whistled along, through the surrounding dark groves of pine, foretold a rising storm. She was insensible to all save the fury that preyed within, and weeping, and exclaiming and calling on him whose ear the cold deep sea had filled for ever, she rushed forward wandering she cared not where !

Her absence alarmed the family—ten—eleven—twelve, and Charlotte was not to be found. A pitiless storm was raging without ; but at last learning what had happened, and that she had received his packet, the Port Admiral ordered brands to be lit, and despite of the elements went forth to seek her. She was not, however, to be found, and in utter despair the pursuit was at length given over. With the earliest dawn it was renewed, and at length they discovered that a part of the rock having fallen into the sea, one of the lower walks had been divided by the gulf. Ignorant of the accident, she might in the dark have been precipitated into the chasm. They looked down, and in a thicket of brambles, some twenty feet below the surface, they beheld a confused mass of drapery. No time was lost in lowering down men and ropes—it was indeed Charlotte ! The thicket had saved her from being precipitated to the bottom, but her person was dreadfully in-

jured by the fall. In the storm of the preceding night her screams were unheard—she was afraid to move for fear the clod of mould in which the brambles grew, should slide down, when she would be dashed to pieces. In this state she had passed the night drenched by the torrents of rain that fell, and exposed to all the fury of the blast. When taken up and carried home she was scarcely alive, and the attending physicians pronounced her to be attacked with violent fever, the result of exposure, and delirious. Alas, it was a delirium that seemed likely to pass away but with the life of the patient! A month had elapsed, and all symptoms of the fever had vanished; but the gay, the sprightly, the delighted, and delighting Charlotte Salisbury, was insane. The name of Falconer was unceasingly on her lips; nor would she consent even for a moment, to part with the miniature which he had returned, and the crumpled piece of paper on which he had traced the last line he had ever written. Nor did the sad symptoms of the same disease which had showed themselves in Nathaniel begin to ameliorate; if anything, they increased. Frequently would he walk up to the mirror, and on seeing his figure, take off his hat to it, make it a low

bow, and remark to the bystander, "There, sir, that's my brother—very much like me, is he not? How do you do, sir?" addressing his image—How do you do to-day? Very much like me my brother is!" At another time he would walk into the room, take off all the little ornaments from the mantel-piece, and button them inside of the front of his coat. If the servants chanced to be arranging the dinner-service, he would pick out a large gravy-spoon, insert the handle of it through the button-holes of his coat, allowing the bowl to protrude, as if it had been a rose; then saying—"Well, sir, I am going to take a walk. I wish you very good morning"—he would march out of one door to return in a few seconds by another.

When we consider how dreadful a malady is this cruel disease, how mournful a sight it is to contemplate the wreck of anything that has once been great, more especially of such a stupendous structure as the human mind: above all, when we reflect on the hereditary disposition which insanity too often shows, it can be readily supposed that the grief of Margarita and her father was extreme. On Margarita the blow fell heavily indeed! She lost at once her most intimate companion, her dearest friend, and her twin sister.

Nor scarcely less dear to her was the other patient, with whom his gentle niece had ever been a great favourite. Now he barely seemed able to recognise her.

CHAPTER XIII.

—— The eye that cannot sleep,
That cannot smile, that cannot weep ;
The heart that feeling, scarcely beats
While the slow shivering blood retreats :
The woe that others may not share,
The night—the morning—of despair,
For which no sunshine breaks the gloom,
Slow gathering o'er the yawning tomb !

BUT with all the misfortunes which had thus unexpectedly fallen on her house, time did not seem to Margarita's eyes, to fly one jot less fleetly than heretofore, when every pleasure and happiness helped to speed the hours along. Two months had fleetly glided away, but not the slightest tidings from Croiser. 'Surely,' thought she, 'he might have come to a determination within this space, if he had been favourable to our union! But I suppose this is to be the last sad blow of fate, which is only wanting to crush me altogether! Alas! when I think of the brief, brief space which has elapsed since I was in pos

session of perfect happiness, it appears to be the illusion of a dream, that everything should thus suddenly have shrunk from my grasp! I could not have expected this cruel blow from him; but I will not blame him, we are all but mere puppets obedient to the law which guides us!"

No longer possessed of a companion with whom to spend the passing hours, and indeed no longer blessed with that smooth serenity of mind which would allow her to turn to her usual occupations, for a respite from the harassing emotions preying on her young heart, she could direct her mind to no one end. Much, but vainly, did she try to keep it from reverting to Croiser, from dwelling on the improbability of six months sufficing to change a determination which had remained firm during a conflict of three. In vain did she banish the hope that he would still be faithful to his choice, or the dreadful suspicion that he had forgotten her! These, with a thousand other torturing ideas, sprang up at every step, since where could she move without recalling some meeting—some look—some kind expression—some word which she had heard him utter on that very spot? It seemed as though each leaf possessed a tongue to call up spirits from the sad and unfathomable recesses of memory to

torment her! Then recurred the mocking structures which her fancy had so often delighted in building on aerial foundations, with which his image was interminably mingled. Now, where were they? The hollow gust of wind rising from the sea, and passing with a mournful cadence through the groaning wood above, appeared to hear her, and yield a still more melancholy repetition of her complaint, while the showers of sear leaves which it hurled to the ground, was typical of the fate which had overtaken all her hopes!

Day after day was passed in wandering over every spot which she had ever trodden with him, and recalling his look, voice, gesture, at every turn. Hour after hour would she pass sitting on the platform of the ruined tower and examining through one of Sir Richard's glasses, every speck that appeared on the horizon. Then would she recall the delight of that evening when she beheld his glittering sail glide over the serene blue of the ocean, until he leapt ashore at her feet; and Hope fresh springing up, would cheat her into the belief that she saw it once more—with the most breathless agitation she watched the animated canvas, but it either passed the port and proceeded up channel, or it came and passed her un-

concerned, or some change in its position discovered a rig totally different from that for which she so anxiously prayed. He never came! Tremblingly would she then sink down upon the cold granite sill of the old gothic window, maddened with the fever of disappointed affection, her beautiful glossy ringlets streaming on the rude gust swelling by, and finding a hundred complaining voices in the worn out crannies of the stone, or breathing its sad liquid melancholy through the wires which Croiser had fixed as an *Æolian* harp on one of the old pinnacles. It was a sound in harmony with her feelings, and leaning back she thought of the hand that fixed it, and in each dying cadence fancied she heard the low plaintive voice of him who had deserted her. In her hand she held the exquisitely tender poems of Gray; she attempted to read, but her eye could only dwell on the handwriting that had traced her name in the first leaf. The page she would peruse was quickly blistered with her tears. If she drew forth her handkerchief to dry those sunken orbs, it was scented with the perfume which he gave her, which he ever used himself, and at once a fresh and still more palpable host of memory's torturing shades arose before her; a still more bitter burst of anguish

succeeded, and she wondered of what substance could that heart be made, that spurned an attachment so devoted, for the pursuit of those unreal bubbles which it despised! It was useless, though he had flown from her, she could not fly from him. His image was inseparably blended with all she thought, remembered, heard, uttered, or beheld, and was indeed a fatal part of her existence! It was more—it was a devouring blight that had fallen on her young spirit, and was fast hurrying her to the grave. Her days being thus passed in the indulgence of feelings that harrowed up her breast, and her nights being chiefly spent in tears and vain regrets, while she looked over each trifle he had ever given her—every slight memento she possessed of him—it will be easily credited that at the end of four months, she scarcely appeared the same creature of grace and loveliness as when she first appeared to Croiser's delighted eyes on the morning of his landing.

Grief had made sad ravages in her beauty! The serene and dove-like quiet of her eye had vanished, and its place was supplied by a restless sparkle, whose treacherous brilliancy spoke too plainly of mental disquiet. Her cheeks were sunken; there was a slight contraction of the brow, the dimple

round her mouth had lost its smile, and deepened into an untimely furrow, the ruddy tint of her lips was no longer to be seen, and the rich blue beneath her eyelid, seemed discoloured by her broken rest. The flowing outline of her figure was gone. She seemed one whom the first hectic of decline was heralding to the tomb—Nor was she less sadly altered in manner. Her temper, but a few months since all gentleness and contentment, now displayed a strange irritability and dissatisfaction as distressing as it was unaccountable to those around, while an inconsiderate word tartly spoken affected her not unfrequently to tears. Gradually her conversation, rare as it was, became incoherent—wild—disjointed. Taking sustenance grew irksome to her. Each passing day appeared to increase her grief. She was constantly wandering over the grounds from the first dawn of morning, till the last glow of the shortened winter's twilight. It might be blowing a gale, or the rain descending in torrents—still it was all one to her, she would find some opportunity of wrapping herself up, and straying towards Maker heights, from whence she could behold the sea, and inhale the tempest that had swept its surface, saying “Perhaps this may have lately kissed his sail!”

The roar of the ocean as it thundered on the rugged line of coast below, the rushy murmuring of the gale as it moaned through the woods crowning the height, these formed the wild music in which she now delighted to indulge, but aught that was soft and gentle, according with her prior taste, no longer possessed a single charm for her, except indeed the tender nursing of those shadowy forms, the realities of which had fled from her for ever.

The fifth month had at length passed—the sixth, —the last, was now entered upon; and when the fact intruded itself on her attention, reason tottered on her throne. The effects of this protracted struggle had become too apparent to escape the attention of the merest observer, and the physicians who were attending Charlotte, considered it their duty to take Sir Richard aside, and after enquiring whether there was any exciting cause, they gave him fairly to understand that if precautionary measures were not adopted, there was every probability of her adding a third to the sad list of his insane relatives. The Port Admiral, whose time was too much occupied with his numerous duties to remark much of what went on around him, had always been accustomed

to rely implicitly on the discretion of his daughters, and allowed them to pursue what course they pleased. The communication of the physicians, therefore, excited the greatest alarm in his mind, and he promised to lose no time in enquiring of Margarita herself, whether there was any actual cause for her despondence.

Sir Richard was in the constant habit of taking—that most delightful of all delightful things—a nap after dinner; while the bright fire blazing up, displayed by its irregular and flickering light, the old oak panelling of the dining-room, the circle of cheerful faces surrounding the grate, and in the corner the high-backed easy chair, containing the portly person of Sir Richard, a silk handkerchief thrown over his head to exclude the light. The circle of cheerful faces was, alas! to be seen no longer; but on the evening which I am about to notice, there was Sir Richard in his easy chair, there was the glad fire throwing its light on the old panels in the back-ground, as well as resting half way on the dessert service. There was the high arched gothic window still shivering occasionally to the November gale, which sighed and moaned outside, as it had done for centuries. Lady Sapphira and her satellites had adjourned to

another room to pursue the delights of whist, in which Puff, as the best calculated by an extra load of dulness, played the part of dumby in addition to his own. There was no one, therefore, left in the dining-room, save Margiée and Sir Richard. As the former sat contemplating the fire and imagining a thousand images in the fantastic forms presented by its glowing particles, she could not help thinking how delightful it would be had Croiser been sitting by her side. Already she fancied she listened to his conversation carried on *sotto voce* for fear of waking the Port Admiral; and was questioning him in the same key why he had not returned sooner, and why he had thus cruelly exposed her to the grief which his absence had occasioned—the falling of a coal interrupted her reverie, and she remembered that she was merely waiting for Sir Richard to throw his handkerchief over his head, preparatory to taking his nap, in order that she might steal out unobserved. On looking up, however, she was surprised to find him awake; and still more so when he said, motioning for her to take a seat by his side, “Margiée, my dear girl, I’m afraid you’re not very well, you’ve looked excessively poorly of late; what is the matter with you my beloved darling?”

There was a pause. "Come, Margiée, that's a dear girl, do speak and let me know what is the matter! Do you want any thing I can get for you? if so and it's to be had for money, you have only to name it and obtain your wish."—

"Oh—no, no, thank you, my dear father!" replied Margarita, much affected as she grasped his hand, "I want nothing that you can obtain for me."

"Well then, that's so much the worse. Now, my dear girl, you know, or if you don't, I hope you should know, that as far as I have ever been able to administer to your comforts or pleasures, I have always been ready to do so; and indeed my darling—you and my poor dear Chatty,—God grant that she may soon be restored to us! It almost breaks my heart when she looks me in the face sometimes, without knowing her old father. I say you and dear Chatty are all that I have had for years to care about. Your happiness, you know, dear girl, has always been mine, and now that heaven has been pleased in the dull evening of old age to take — — — one—of my joys away for a time, God knows I should have a tender eye over the other that is left to me. As to nothing being the matter with you, Margarita, the thing's impossible;

there is something, nay, a great deal the matter with you, week after week you've been pining away until you're not like yourself. Do tell me what it is ! Do consider, dear Margiée, that there can be no secrets between us. What interests you, is of importance to me, and what grieves you hurts me. If you've any little secrets in the matter, they shall be as sacred in my breast as your own ; but, dear Margiée, don't add to the other sorrows of your old father, that of being excluded from the confidence of his only child ; for so, if it's God's will, I may soon have to call you. Isn't it about this flyaway fellow, Croiser ? Well, I thought so, but don't cry, darling—because if you begin to do that—why—why—ye see,” and the tears were already falling, “ I shall be fool enough to do the same. What is it ? Has he been playing you false ? Well, don't cry so, dear Margiée—I take your meaning. I suppose the slippery-tongued fellow has been telling you the usual story about love and all that, and then slipped his cables. May-be in a huff. If this is all, Margiée, hold up—the Trades, you know, chop round once in six months, and deuce is in it, if he holds out more steadily than they do—Croiser will be back again by and by, I don't doubt, and then,

dear soul, you shall jilt him if you like, to make it all square again."

"You mistake, my dear father—I have no reason to complain of Captain Croiser—he has not treated me—as—as you suppose."

"Umph!—well—well. Then for the life of me I don't know what to make of it! But is there nothing betwixt you, Margarita?" She was silent. "I mean, you know, that you're engaged?"

"No, my dear father, I am not."

"And you don't think of having him?"

"I—I—don't think I ever shall."

"Well, well, then, if that's the case, we must try and find you a better match elsewhere. I must say, I'm rather glad to hear that it isn't my young friend Croiser, who's at the bottom of all this mischief; for I must say, though I don't like his secrecy, that I've a high opinion of him, and if he had been playing the fool, I should have blamed myself for taking it so easily. To be sure, I thought that I saw you getting fond of each other; it might have been only my fancy, you know, Margiée, and as I felt pretty certain that he was a gentleman at bottom, and a smart seaman; and as I knew that I had enough cash to set you fair in the

world, why I was well content that the choice should be of your own making, since your happiness was all I ever looked to. You know, Margiée," breathing a deep sigh after a pause of a few minutes, "that ever since poor nephew Frank was lost at sea, my old baronetcy has been without an heir. Now, though I hope I am not such a fool as to be eternally talking about rank and heraldry, and all that confounded pack of cant and nonsense; yet I must say, as the descendant of Hugh Salisbury, who was dubbed baronet in a hard-fought field some five hundred years since, I shouldn't altogether like to have an old name scored off the books, and have an R put against it in the doomsday cheque. So as ye see my poor dear little Chatty is—ehem—is—I wish you wouldn't set the example of this confounded piping fit. But, however, I was only going to say, that I look forward, Margarita, with every hope of joy to your marrying."

"Say no more, my dear father, for heaven's sake, say no more!" interrupted Margiée, flinging herself on his neck, and giving full vent to the pangs which struggled within. "Pendervis has written to make me another offer, and I have taken six months to consider of it. I must return

him an answer by the twelfth of next month. You know, dearest father, it is a step on which all my future happiness or misery depends, and it is natural that I should feel much affected at deciding on it. I believe I shall marry him—but till that day arrives, question me no more—I entreat—I implore. After that I am submissive to my fate—though,” speaking too low for his ear, “it involve ruin, misery, and death.”

Thus conjured, it was totally at variance with the character of the kind Sir Richard to allude to it any further. His tenderness towards the sufferer, was, if possible, redoubled; and though to her, each day that passed was like an additional dagger planted in her heart, yet he contentedly beheld their rapid flight, cherishing the fond but vain idea that they were gradually restoring her to felicity and contentment. The nearer the day approached, the more intense did Margarita's agony become, until at last it was a question whether her conduct was the result of sanity or madness.

The country squire thus chosen as the swine before whom such a pearl was to be flung, afforded a fair sample of his kind—a blunt, vulgar, uninformed “good man,” as it is phrased, who, in

mixing with the world, had acquired none of its polish; but from finding his wealth carry weight with the majority, had thereby become doubly riveted in the obstinacy of his narrow and native ideas—in short, a mere link in the chain of existence, whose sole purpose seemed to be—to eat—drink—sleep—perpetuate his line, and re-combine with the kindred clay from whence he sprung. He liked Margarita because she was toasted as one of the prettiest girls in Devon; and he was well aware that her property would be no trifle. In all other respects he had as much idea of woman, as a savage has of a harp: the latter knows that the chords of the instrument must be struck in order to produce harmony—but of the light and skilful touch—the knowledge of time—the ear for delicacy of feeling, and much more so necessary to the production of that exquisite melody which ravishes and enchants the soul—alas, he is barbarously ignorant! As the day approached for the decision, it occurred to Mr. Pendervis as a fitting step that he should go and pay his respects to the lady who was about to honour him. When poor Margiée beheld his ungainly figure ushered into the drawing room, habited in a brown coat with brass figured buttons, buck-skin pantaloons,

spurs, and top-boots somewhat splashed, she could not forbear to contrast him with the wanderer who had deserted her, and in whose motions was at once discovered all the polish of a court. He spoke, and the antithesis was complete. His ready and familiar "How d'ye do, Miss, I hope you're well—long time since we met, not since last October—Remember killed the first cock day before"—fell on her ear like a sentence of doom: as tantalizing remembrance called up the soft and delicate salutation with which Croiser's lips were ever wont to greet her. "I cannot—I will not—I had rather die than give myself up as the prey of such a thing!" thought she in the first bitterness of the comparison; but then she reflected "Yet I have known him for years—at least I shall not be deceived, though it matters little for the short period during which I shall survive this horrid sacrifice: still I shall be sure of meeting with warmth of heart, though it be allied to conceit, and generosity of disposition, though obscured by obtuseness. At any rate in linking the sad remains of my destiny to such a lord and master, my heart will not be called on to bestow a passion which it never more can grant. Yes, though I will and do undertake in all honour to renounce

my love for Croiser on the instant that I become Pendervis' wife, yet I feel it equally wrong to imagine for an instant that the love thus seared shall ever freshly bud forth for another.

At last the interview was over, she was to see him no more until he had received her decision. She retired to her room, and the excitement of supporting such a mockery being over, her dejection returned with redoubled vehemence, and she passed some hours in misery and tears ; then wandering forth in spite of a November gale, she gazed on the troubled sea, or fondly retraced those steps which she had often trod with him, and lingered long and wistfully in every path which his feet had hallowed. No sail in sight! —the morrow, and the morrow, and the morrow, with many more, were spent in the same maddening and fruitless manner, until the dreaded eve arrived, whose darkness was only to be dispelled by the fatal day, which if it did not witness Croiser's arrival, was to sever them for ever. She was scarcely conscious of what was going on around her. Every thing seemed to be in a perfect whirl —the faces of familiar friends changed and altered before her eyes—the very accents on her lips formed themselves into words at variance with

those which she had intended to utter. It seemed as though she had drunk so deeply of grief as to become perfectly intoxicated, and was oppressed at once with its exciting effects on the heart, and its stupefying results on the brain. Every thing swam confusedly around her, she was bewildered in the boundless magnitude of her woe. As usual, she went forth to revisit the cherished haunts so dear to her, but the mental mist which had fallen, obscured all. The accustomed roar of the breakers fell on her ear as her eyes unconsciously wandered over the bleak aspect of Cawsand Bay; and the usual gale howled along, sweeping by her wan delicate face, and wantoning in her long auburn ringlets; but she neither felt the one nor heard the other. Her retina certainly received the reflection of outward objects, but the glance of her eye was turned inward on the chaos of her mind. She lingered there for hours, gazing on the sea, scarce knowing what it was that she beheld, until the rain fell in torrents, and she mechanically sought the house, the chills and damp around her heart exceeding those of the sky or earth.

The night was passed in that low feverish hysteric state which denotes oppression of the brain.

Now tears that yielded no relief in flowing, and wild unmeaning laughter that convulsed the heart it mocked. Still the astonishing strength of her mind bore up against the bodily ills waiting to crush it! Her senses seemed somewhat to return in the morning, and she felt some indistinct impression that she had a part to perform. In the same state of mind as on the preceding evening, she arose, noted each minute carefully as it flew, and watched out the weary length of day. He had not come, and the torpor of her wretchedness seemed to gain upon her as she asked each of the servants individually if Captain Croiser had been to call upon her during the day. Having received a sorrowful negative from each, with an air of bewilderment and stupefaction she retired to her room, and flinging herself down, exclaimed, "He has indeed abandoned me; we are severed for ever. I have no solace but in death."

The intellect had done its utmost in retarding the maladies which cold, exposure, and anxiety, had brought upon her emaciated frame. Its motive for action was now over, and its spring lost! The natural re-action took place—fit succeeded fit in alarming violence, and medical aid being obtained, it was only, as Lady Sapphira ever

afterwards remarked, by the most decided antiphlogistic treatment that she at length recovered.

Her first question was, if any thing had been heard of Captain Croiser, and on learning that he had never arrived, she called for pen, ink, and paper, wrote and accepted the offer of Mr. Pendervis, and left it to him, to arrange with her father the time of the ceremony.

Strong, invincibly strong as had been and still was her passion for Croiser, it never once surmounted the barrier of her principle. It is true, once or twice it flashed across her mind to give way, but the idea was instantly spurned, and she resolutely determined that her bursting heart should break before she became the bride of a traitor! Had he been at hand to tempt her from this rigid path, it is possible that his eloquence and persuasion might in some unguarded moment have won upon her ardent attachment, and taking advantage of some temporary impulse have secured his prize. But as she often congratulated herself, he was not there to render her trial still more severe. "I will be the sacrifice, and I deserve it, for placing my affections on one of whom I was utterly ignorant." At times she thought of refusing Pendervis, and remaining single until the arrow festering

in her heart should finally release her from all troubles; but then again she recurred to her word, for which she had the most sacred feeling. Besides, by remaining unmarried, she was not less severed from Croiser. If he was unable to renounce his unnatural schemes in six months, he was unworthy of her, and if he returned at any subsequent period, and found her still in existence as Margarita Salisbury, there would only be a renewal of the same heart-rending conflict. But as the wife of another all would be over, and between them would have yawned a gulf as impassable, deep, drear, and fixed as the very grave!

He was now inevitably and irreparably lost to her! Had he stood beside her at that moment it would have been in vain! All that remained was to soothe the excruciating agony of that canker which was not to be cured; to support with firmness and resignation the miserable portion of existence through which she must still drag on, as a dispensation from above, hoping that her obedience to the will of fate, would win the only boon now available to her—an early tomb!

Having arrived at this conclusion, her grief assumed another form, it was not less deep, less

deadly, but she now knew it to be useless, and brooding over it in secret, she appeared in public to be more resigned to what was about to take place. Indeed it was only a close and acute observer that could discern the icy thrill that crept over her, as after a long reverie she withdrew her eyes from the sea and seemed to shrink back from an imaginary phantom before her ; like some poor creature who is walking in her sleep towards a precipice, yet with human instinct shudders ere she falls. Anxious to abridge this horrid interval of suspense, and thinking that the sooner the ceremony took place the nearer she would be to her release from all earthly troubles, she had consented to her nuptials taking place within a month from the day of acceptance.

Every thing was now hastened forward, and no expense spared to render the sad spectacle as magnificent in appearance, as it would be hollow and wretched in reality. All her young friends were invited from the surrounding neighbourhood to spend the intermediate time with her, and try to cheer the heart-broken bride. Around her was gaiety, bustle, pleasure, and splendour, the pallid brow of the betrothed heiress alone was crowned with misery and a wreath of brambles. It was

her cheek alone which shewed the opposing tints of wan dejection and hectic care. It was her light hazel eye alone, in which woe seemed to have gathered up many tears, and which extreme weakness solely prevented from falling. It was around her delicate mouth only that the dimples never expanded into smiles, or changed, but to express the suffocating sense of anguish labouring within. A lethargy, drear and ominous, had fallen upon her spirit. She seemed among the rest a poor drooping thing—animate, it is true, but a mere automaton of wretchedness. Day after day crept by—at length it was the bridal eve. On the morrow she was to forsake the name of Salisbury, and all the thousand associations making it so inexpressibly dear. For some time past she had ceased her useless and harrowing rambles among those cherished spots, but she now determined to take one last melancholy indulgence, ere forsaking them altogether. She first ascended the old tower, and having spent two hours in gazing on the element which bore her faithless lover, listening to the mournfully flowing tones of his æolian harp, and giving way to the deep throes that convulsed and oppressed her, she wandered along those

lovely but solitary paths overhanging the sea, and ascended by Maker church.

With an indescribable feeling, she approached the low wall that divided the church-yard from the park, "There," 'twas thus she thought, "is the dreary pile in which I am to be immolated!" Shuddering, she withdrew her glance, and as she did so, it rested on a red heap of mould beneath her—she looked down—it was a new made grave "Hah! that is well!—they know who is coming then; for if that prove my bridal altar in the morning, 'tis but fit this should be my bridle couch at eve. Oh, Croiser! false but dearest Croiser! How could you thus desert me!" Insensible and unheeding of every thing around, she returned to the house, where her young companions were waiting with impatient delight to try on the marriage dress.

She heard not their playful rebuke for being out so late, and with calm passive listlessness allowed herself to be decked out in all the glare of pearls and white satin. Despite of all that she had suffered, she still appeared entrancingly lovely; but it was a loveliness of tears—of grief—woe—despair; and while its magic enchanted—it withered the heart of the beholder!

As she stood that night forlorn amid the merry troop around her—her bleeding bosom and aching temples, decked with every bauble that wealth or art could bring to the enchantment of beauty, she formed but a splendid representation of some heathen sacrifice—she was the victim garlanded and led by troops of rosy girls to be inhumanly offered up to a senseless block. That block was Pendervis, and to-morrow's sun was to behold the revolting ceremony.

While the gay and thoughtless group were thus amusing themselves, some with songs and some with dancing, the door was suddenly thrown open, and Charlotte appeared in the midst of them. She was sadly altered from the splendour of her beauty, but still deeply interesting, while the glow upon her hollow cheek, and too lustrous sparkle of her eyes proclaimed her disease, and took by surprise the compassion of the beholder.

When she observed what was going on, she advanced, and mingling in the dance, as she waved her hands above her head, sang with her usual sweetness of voice, but in a wild, hurried, and unconnected strain, some chant almost word for word with the following :

Hah ! I come where mirth entrancing
Wings the laughing hours along,
Forms of youth and beauty glancing,
Add to all the charms of song !
To-morrow brings a bridal day,
Faded loves and vows forsaking ;
Tear those robes of joy away,
All unfit for hearts thus breaking !
See the bride stand tearless now,
Anguish in her burning eye,
Death's cold damps upon her brow
Have left those orbs too dry !
When stands the bride by the bridegroom's side,
And marriage vows are spoken,
A change shall come,
Shall leave thee dumb,
And all those vows be broken !

Call the dance, let mirth resound,
Breathe the cittern, strike the lute !
Chittarra strings
Each voice that sings,
No harmony be mute !
Call the dance, let mirth resound,
Light feet with heavy hearts trip round,
To tones of hollow flute !
'Tis a night of joy and pleasure,
Speed and space no mirthful measure !
Banish frowns and welcome smiles,
Though treachery lurks beneath love's wiles !
O'er the surface all is bright,
Lift the veil—'tis changed to night !
Night and darkness—woe and tears,
Joy and madness—hope and fears.
Then call the dance and mirth for me,
To-morrow morn shall dawn for thee !

The altar is there,
And short the prayer,
And the priest he shall not tarry,
But woe to thee,
If that morn shall see,
Thy false lips vow and marry !
The altar is there,
And ready the pray'r,
But a tomb yawns deep in sight,
If noon shall hear,
Thy false tongue swear,
The tomb shall be thine by night.

I go—I go—
To me is woe,
To ye all mirth and gladness !
Yet heed the word,
Thus wildly heard,
The fearful gift of madness !
For thee, fair bride, twin sister dear,
Thine hour of doom draws swiftly near ;
Choose thee now 'twixt life and death,
But let not falsehood taint thy breath !
By my madness—by my grief,
Hours of rest and bliss too brief.
By these pains I've learnt to feel,
By these throes I'd fain conceal,
By these withering aches that steal
O'er my heart, and o'er my brain,—
By each wish for peace again,
By each hope of future day,
I conjure thee, say him nay !
Vain, all vain, your art to hide,
Wounds our bleeding hearts divide !
My glance descries,
Within those eyes,

The pangs which rend thy soul !
Distended see they roll and start,
And show the anguish of thy heart,
Beyond thy mind's controul !
A thousand shades thy passions wear—
Grief—Repentance—Rage—Despair !

Uttering the last lines in a shrill tone, amounting almost to a shriek, she clasped her hands to her forehead and rushed from the room.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ A deadly blight
Comes o'er the councils of the brave,
And blasts them in their hour of might.”

LALLA ROOKH.

WE will now return to Croiser, and examine into the causes which kept him away from one to whom he was devotedly attached. The reader already knows, that when he put to sea, he was distracted between his love for Margarita and the host of passions which urged him to remain firm to his former intentions and his adherence to Rannolini. The latter was at this period expected at Boulogne from Paris, and it was to that port therefore that he directed his course.

Rannolini's piercing observation soon discerned from Croiser's wandering and confused manner, that something had occurred to disturb his self-possession. Having questioned him on the subject, the latter freely confessed that on mature

deliberation he could not reconcile it to his conscience to aid in the introduction of a foreign power into England. Rannolini was at this both confused and alarmed, as the reader will see it was of no small importance to his cause, that among the foremost of his supporters there should be a young man of family, a clever sailor, an undaunted officer, and one who had been brought up in the British navy. A long argument ensued; Rannolini basing his side of the question on the assertion that they were not going to England to conquer, but to emancipate it from the yoke of an oligarchy. Finally, he asserted that his plans were on the eve of completion, that he was about to send two squadrons to sea; one from Rochefort, under Villeneuve, and another from Boulogne, under Miniessy; and that he, Croiser, must undertake a delicate service, on which a great deal depended. This was nothing less than carrying out instructions to the West Indies, as to the course to be pursued by Miniessy and Villeneuve on their arriving there, and meeting the Admiral of that station, who had himself received orders to be in a given latitude by a certain day, when Croiser was to meet him with these despatches;

this indirect mode having been adopted lest the two first named Admirals should fall into the hands of the English, and betray their destination.

It was long before Croiser could bring himself to undertake this mission, but Rannolini was so urgent and—as all those who ever met him can testify—carried in his manner such an irresistible argument, that he at last consented, thinking he should still find time to return before the expiration of Margarita's six months, and that the voyage would afford him time for reflection.

Unnerved and rendered wholly unfit for any duty by the conflicting emotions of his mind, he set off. On arriving at the given spot, the admiral was not to be found—Croiser waited for a week—he cruised in every direction. Still no admiral—his rage was beyond all bounds—half of the given time had already expired. What could he do? What ought he to do? Pride forbade him to return unsuccessful, while his love presented to him the torturing idea that he might not be able to see Margarita in time—for see her he was determined he would, whether he carried to her the tidings of defection from her love or submission to her sway. Again the thousand perplexing thoughts that sprung up to incline him

first to the former and then to the latter course ! Moreover, what would Rannolini say to him, if he came back after having waited no more than a week in the appointed spot ? And yet, how could he afford more time ? Too well he knew Margarita's principle, her firmness, her love of truth, and sacred respect for her word, the exactness of all her actions. " How do I not know," said he, " that by being even a day over the appointed time, I may not for ever lose her ? She may attribute it to indifference—unkindness—obstinacy—forget that accidents may detain me—pledge her hand to that fellow who has made her an offer, and be deaf to all that I may plead !"

On the strong and resolute mind of Croiser, this suspense and agitation if it could not produce a deeper effect than it did on the gentle spirit of Margarita, at least showed itself in more violent results. In her it was misery—in him it was rage. Every hour that passed, served but to work him up to a greater pitch of fury. Unable amid the many paths which bewildered him to find the one of which he exactly approved, he could scarcely resolve how to act. He waited two days more at the appointed place of rendezvous, then wrought up to a degree of desperation, determined to push

on for the Mexican Gulph, and after passing among the West Indian islands, in search of the French admiral, to return if unsuccessful and see Margarita—notwithstanding the vast importance of the despatches with which he was intrusted.

Once arrived at a conclusion, he felt his mind somewhat relieved, and carried on all sail until even *his* daring could go no further. Having touched at several islands without success, and heard various reports respecting the object of his search, Croiser spurred on by the shortness of the time allowed him to reach England, and bent upon risking all, hesitated no longer, but stood direct away for the Cape on his road to Cherbourg.

In the meanwhile, the Admiral who had been unexpectedly delayed a fortnight, by having to dodge the English men-of-war, arrived at the appointed spot, and though fearing that the vessel sent to meet him had departed tired of waiting, he continued to cruise in that vicinity until driven considerably to leeward by a gale. While he was working up to regain his position, Croiser re-passed over the place of appointment, and seeing no sail in sight, hove-to for a night, and then spread every inch of canvas for Europe.

For the first three weeks they had favourable

gales, and even Nine-fathom Tim seeing the rate at which Croiser carried sail, “made so bold as to ask his honour whether he was a trying to blow the sticks out o’ her?” Tim having been assured that his commander entertained no such intentions, they proceeded with great rapidity for some three weeks, when they gradually found themselves becalmed. With feverish agitation, Croiser watched this treacherous lull of the elements. A day—two days—three—four—five—six—a week—and they were still there. His phrenzy now knew no bounds. Night and day he did nothing but pace his deck, muttering to himself, striking his forehead, and stamping on the senseless planks beneath him. Now, though holding such a superstitious practice in the utmost scorn, he would with an imploring look woo the loitering wind, re-approach his sails with that prolonged low whistle which seamen delight to use. Now he would anxiously raise his glass, and examine with the most intense expectation the indistinct horizon which never disclosed the ripple for which he prayed—then dashing the telescope to the deck, he stamped it to atoms, exclaiming in a paroxysm of wrath, “What need have I of such a tube? even though it be the best that ever brought a

distant prize home to a seaman's eye!" Flying down below he would bury his face in his hands, give up all in despair—recall the lovely being he had lost, and accuse the cruelty of his fate in awarding such a lot to him, or the blindness of his folly in undertaking such a commission. Presently he would acknowledge it was a just retribution for having entertained such views on his native country. In a few seconds he would contradict himself once more—assert that destiny intending him to liberate his native soil, had thus purposely rescued him from the fascinations of a siren who would have turned him aside; then starting up he would resume his original purpose, and vow fifty-fold vengeance and retaliation, to sink down once more as he remembered it was the cherished land of her he loved, and burst into a wild and uncontrollable fit of tears. Calmed and refreshed by this expression of his anguish, he would arise, shortly reflecting that no success was denied to perseverance, and that nothing was so safely delayed as obedience to the dictates of despair—those, alas, it was never too late to follow.

Obliterating the marks of his emotion, he would now return on deck, with another glass ascend to the mast head, spend hours on the watch, and

return trembling and ill, and sick at heart, scarcely daring to reflect that he had portioned out each day before this fatal calm overtook him, and even then he had scarcely time sufficient for all that was before him.

In this dreadful manner days rolled on. Poor Tarpaulin in perfect amazement, beheld his master in a state of phrenzy which he had never witnessed before, under what he conceived to be ten thousand times worse difficulties, yet he dared not speak to him; so incomprehensible did the change appear. At last after a lapse of more than a fortnight, the breeze came, but the abrupt wildness in Croiser's manner which its long delay had occasioned, did not, alas, vanish with its arrival. He was an altered man! and a tiger from whom every thing has been reft, save strength and ferocity, was the only fitting comparison. It appeared as though the mortal failings of our nature had flown from him in terror. For a month he never took off his apparel; the slight quantity of sustenance which he used, could scarcely be called eating; he walked the deck unceasingly during daylight, and for many hours in the night, while the remainder were spent sitting in the weather hammock-netting to windward, leaning against a

backstay; yet his crew affirmed that he never slept, since he was the first to notice the exact moment when the sails required to be trimmed, as well as the least deviation which the helmsman made in steering by the particular star he had pointed out. If Nine-fathom Tim, urged by the affection subsisting between them, gradually edged up, venturing on some common-place remark, by which to introduce his request that Croiser would take a little rest, the latter abruptly waved his hand, while a low gurgle in his throat was the only sound heard. He had not even a word for his old friend!—to whom he could not speak sharply, and was too wildly agonized to salute as usual.

“ Well, well,” muttered Tarpaulin, as saddened and disappointed he moved forward to leeward, “ there’s a pretty mess of fish—ye may stretch me up at the yard-arm if I can diskiver the meaning of it. All that Nine-fathom-Tim knows, is this—that he never took on so—no, not even when poor ould Sal Moffat kicked the bucket—rest and bless her! But, Lor! when a fellow comes to my time o’ life, he sees it’s no manner o’ sarvice grieving for them sort o’ things? I warrant, if he’d only be like me, and take a drop of something short on it, he’d soon find it another guess story, as

the song says."—Here drawing forth his bosom friend whose consolation never failed him, he took his dram and sought his hammock, while the rest of the crew gladly stowed themselves out of sight of poor Croiser's glaring eye-balls, for now they trembled as they passed him.

At length they made the coast of France, and with the utmost impatience Croiser came to in the little fishing port eastward of Cherbourg, whence he had embarked with Rannolini for England some months before. Changing his soiled habiliments, he hastened on shore and posted off express to Paris through Caen, leaving strict injunctions with Tarpaulin to be ready for sea at a moment's notice.

It wanted a quarter to eight o'clock in the evening, when Croiser was shown into the cabinet of Rannolini. There stood the elegant *fauteuil* on which it was the custom of the foreigner to sit rocking himself to and fro, while he notched its arm with a pen-knife, and revolved in his mind those mighty schemes which were eternally in conception. This chair which was placed before a writing table in the middle of the room, stood with its back to the fire. It had the window on the right hand, and opposite was a case filled with books of various but standard

authors, on tactics, politics, religion, and even poetry. Beside this was seen a door. A second writing table, but of more humble construction, belonging to his secretary, stood near the window which looked on a promenade. Immediately opposite to this again, and consequently on the left hand side of Rannolini's *fauteuil*, was another door, behind which steps were now heard; it opened, and he appeared in person, saying, "Ah my Croiser, thou'rt quickly returned. What says the Admiral?"—embracing him—then quickly starting back as the light from the candles fell on his emaciated and haggard face—"How!—What's this?—You are the bearer of bad news?—Speak! He has not fool-like allowed himself to be engaged by the enemy?"—

"No, M. Rannolini, though I have no good news to impart, at any rate my tidings are not so bad as your fears have suggested; but I regret to say that I have been unable to fall in with him, or deliver your despatches, so consequently have brought them back."

"What's that you say?" quickly demanded the other, with his usual phrase when displeased, his brow falling on the instant, and his manner becoming suddenly and totally changed.

“ I say I have been unable to fall in with the admiral,” repeated Croiser, “ and consequently have had no opportunity of delivering your despatches. I regret —— ”

“ ‘ Regret!’ is that a term becoming *this occasion*?—becoming *you*? ” fiercely interrupted Rannolini, taking the words out of Croiser’s mouth, and stamping on the ground. While breaking away from the other he paced up and down the apartment, exclaiming with considerable gesticulation, “ What is to be the result of this? What can be the result of this? I see it at a glance! I would not that it should have happened for half that I possess! *Tell me*—How was it? How could it be? He had my positive orders to be there on the appointed day. Explain, I say!”

“ Simply thus—I made all sail to arrive at the given spot by the date you named. On my doing so I found no one there. I cruised round it for an entire week.”

“ ‘ A week?’ Psha! you dream!—a week? ”

“ Yes, an entire week —— ”

“ Well, and if you did, what was a week—‘ an entire week’?—an entire fortnight—an entire month? *What* was the object of this paltry time? Do you think I sent you out to hurry

home again? *I*, at least, am not such a fool!—a week! Any thing had been better than miserably failing in the execution of orders on which every thing—the whole of our scheme depends. What next—you waited an ‘entire week,’ and then?”

“I made all sail, passed in among the West Indian islands, without finding him, came back to the rendezvous, waited a night, and then returned with my dispatches unopened, and there they are,” Croiser replied, flinging them down on the table, struggling with the rage that possessed him at being thus upbraided.

Rannolini snatched up the packet, tore it in two, flung it on the ground, and stamping on the remaining fragments, burst forth once more as his eyes scowled on Croiser. “And this is from you?—*you*? Whom I have trusted in every thing? Unable to deliver even a paltry order! It is well I tried the blade before I leant on it! But you have ruined all! Every thing! I shall be unable to recover this for years—perhaps never! Here, when I was eagerly expecting you back—Here, when our enterprise merely waited for the accomplishment of your mission and the ends it embraced to be successful—you return to tell me you failed! *Where* did you find a tongue to

utter such a sentence? Your negligence or imbecility in saving a few weeks' time, has done more than all the efforts of our enemies! We were about to crush them. We were in the act of taking the spring—a brief pause, and we should have had our feet upon their *necks*. In an instant all is thrown into confusion. Confused by one as deeply interested in its success as any—and for what? Was it misgiving? Was it treachery or imbecility?” Fixing his eagle glance on Croiser's pallid countenance. “I never knew the latter show itself in you before. Did you not see what would result from this? It was not as if you had been ignorant of what you carried, but you knew all. I had entrusted you with every thing. You were a principal mover in the scheme. You knew that Miniessy and Villeneuve were ignorant of the nature and extent of my plans; that on their arriving in the Indies they were to receive from the admiral of the station the despatches sent out by you, which alone could inform them that they were to proceed straight to the English Channel, calling off Ferrol and Brest for reinforcements. You knew that all this trouble was taken to prevent those despatches falling into the hands of the enemy and betraying my design. A moment's

thought would have shown you what must ensue. Not only will it leave the admiral at a loss what to do with fleets sent out to him without orders, but it will also derange Villeneuve and Miniessy themselves! Where now shall I direct you to find them to remedy this blunder? By the time you would reach them, we ought to be on the eve of acting! And with the English in such force upon the seas! When all depended on the most delicate manœuvres to leave our fleets wandering without instructions! It would have been as well had each ship been without a compass card! No, it is irremediable—I see it all! Instead of being the conquerors of our enemies, we shall be their laughing stocks. But I forgot—they are now, I see, *my* enemies only, not *your's*. Yes, *I* shall be their laughing-stock; when in the very act of hurling them from high, and trampling them in the dust!” convulsively shaking his hand as he clasped the empty air.

“It must be so!” Rannolini continued, violently pacing his cabinet. “These squadrons instead of passing rapidly home, distracting the enemy by their appearance, and being in the Channel to cover my debarkation, will be loitering until they are engaged by the enemy *seriatim*, conquered in

detail, and England left mistress of the sea. Then France, without a fleet, unable to reach her insolent and relentless foe, will have to make up her loss by an immense expenditure of men and money, and what is worse—*time*! This opportunity may never occur again! Seamen are not like soldiers, they are not to be drilled in six weeks. By the time we have recovered our fleets, France may be unable to turn her attention entirely to those accursed islands! Her frontiers are now unmenaced. It may not always remain so—Pitt commands a mine of gold. He is corrupting the whole continent. France may soon have a mightier host of foes—but I know her strength—on land let them dread it! I'll teach them. I'll trample them *thus*! Some of them shall be swept from the face of the earth, and their name as nations be heard no longer! But for this stroke I should have begun the campaign after next as conqueror of the globe—England gone, and the rest are dust from which the electric spark of animation has been driven. But it was not for me to help it! I cannot be everywhere! I could but plan it. If my plans had been faithfully followed, I know—I feel, that they would have been successful. Yet I was not to blame for entrusting

you! How could I know that you would have acted thus? Oh, Fortune! is it denied to me to have even *one* to second me in my hard task? Our late enterprise was hazardous enough. You showed no ignorance—no want of forethought there? But I suppose I may be thankful that I pace my own cabinet instead of the cell of an English prison! You have deceived me.”

“It is false,” retorted Croiser with equal rage, long withheld but now boiling over, at these injurious suspicions, and previously wrought up, as the reader knows he was, he no longer cared what he said, and had only been restrained hitherto by the affection and veneration which he bore to Rannolini. “I repel your base insinuations with the utmost scorn! I have done every thing that was in my power. Even *you*—*your* gigantic genius is only *led* by a favourable fate, and must some day like other mortals stoop to your destiny, should it ever turn against you.”

“Enough—enough—go—go. There is no need to say more at present. It is well, truly! to talk of Fortune—she, like her sex—as *you* can testify,” sneering, “must be hardly sought to be won. Fate may well frown on those who are lukewarm in her pursuit!”

“Lukewarm I am not.”

“Neither am I, so begone!—you are only treacherous—you have ruined the noblest plan that ever was conceived. *You—you*, on whom I had vainly fixed to be the other monarch of the world. Begone, I say. It is through you that England has escaped me. It is an empire lost! It is more—It is the empire of the globe!!”

“I go,” replied Croiser, endeavouring to conceal his passion at these bitter reproaches. “It is for your genius to correct and remedy the blunders of my stupidity. Should you choose to want me, you can send to the *Theatre Français*.” And before Rannolini could reply, he turned and quitted the room by a third door, which I have not mentioned, and which was situated on the right of the window, or between the window and the fire-place, and led to a smaller cabinet for a second secretary.

No sooner did Croiser find himself at a little distance from the building which he had just quitted, than he looked round to see that no one was following him, and then quickening his steps as he pursued his purposely circuitous route through a number of low streets, towards the banks of the Seine, he gave way to all the wrath before pent in. “Fool that I am!” he exclaimed,

“ I should have known him better! Often as I have witnessed his fury at disappointment, I never could have thought that he would have turned thus on *me*. He suspects me! and with him to suspect is to prevent. A few hours more in Paris, and I may have to pay an unwilling visit to Vincennes. But all artful as he is, he has no baby with whom to grapple in me. I will not lose an instant. My mind misgave me that it would be thus! Oh, to think it is for such an hour as this, that I have lost Margarita! Lost she must be, since nearly three weeks have elapsed beyond the fatal day. Oh my God! I do acknowledge the retribution, it is not for mortals to take vengeance! She was right. Despite of all that I have suffered from tyrants, who disgraced the name of ‘Englishmen,’ Britain was nevertheless the land of my birth. Oh that I had listened to the pure thoughts and unbiassed advice of my adored Margarita! *How* could I ever doubt the truth of those persuasive tones—and yet I did owe Rannolini a large debt of gratitude, which I was bound to pay! Let me be thankful that the payment is made, even though he does not acknowledge it as he should. Even though it has rendered me a beggar in happiness—a wretch for

life! Yet at last the score is defrayed, and our account is, I hope, closed. I see my error—I will be misled no longer—I will see her—yes, see her once more—though the bride of another—and then! Alas!—but no matter, I have deserved it—it is but unhappiness, and that has long been my share. One last look, and it matters little where I hide my head till ‘life’s poor play is o’er!’”

Having soon arrived at a low second-hand clothes shop, he purchased a common sailor’s cap and jacket; then proceeding once more until he arrived at a convenient spot, he slipped on the apparel he had purchased, and threw his own into a corner, calling to sad remembrance when he assisted Rannolini in a similar stratagem, when flying from Chatham; now—strange fate—he had to fly from Rannolini. This accomplished, he hurried on to the Seine, jumped into a boat, and rowed down the river, landing considerably below the city. Though he had not sufficiently foreseen Rannolini’s anger to contemplate flying from its effects, yet he still thought it probable that he might object to his return at that moment to England, and had provided for it accordingly, by having a superb

horse which he possessed, taken from Paris, and left in waiting at a village on the river's bank. Dismissing the boatman somewhat above this, he walked on, mounted his steed, and set off in good earnest towards his port. Whenever his passport was demanded, he showed the order which he possessed, emanating from the highest personage in the state, to let him pass free at all times. This Rannolini had not yet had time to get countermanded, and Croiser had foreborne to use it in Paris.

Pursuing his journey night and day with all possible despatch, he was at length fortunate enough to reach his ship without molestation. Having got on board, he familiarly slapped Nine-fathom-Tim on the back, saying, "Hurrah! my old boy, I'm glad to see your honest old face again. Trip your anchor as soon as possible!"

Tarpaulin, delighted at seeing his master "in a more rashinnol way," as he termed it, joyfully obeyed his order, and stood out to sea. At night they were becalmed, and just in the grey of a winter's morning, what should they descry, but a fine French frigate stealing down on them from the direction of Cherbourg. She made the signal, "Heave to." To which the only answer that

Croiser returned was by crowding all sail. She immediately gave chase, which was continued through the whole of the day; but a fog coming on, she was quickly distanced. Before reaching mid-channel they were overtaken by a gale, and though they spared no effort to gain Plymouth, they were driven as low down as Falmouth.

Having landed on the instant, Croiser gladly availed himself of the first carriage with four horses, that could be put into harness; and with Nine-fathom Tim sitting behind, his long legs almost touching the ground, they resumed their travels with all possible speed.

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning when Croiser set off, so wildly impatient did he feel, that he would not permit the delay of a moment. The sun rose ushering in a splendid winter's day, and as he sat in his open carriage, his travelling-cap removed from his head to let the bracing frosty air play on his fevered temples, he felt his spirits grow lighter than they had been for months, as if struggling to regain their wonted tone; but there was a dead heavy weight which they were unable to throw off, and which almost invariably oppresses the heart when on the eve of some momentous event.

He beheld the loveliness of nature around him, and it charmed his eye, but could do no more; the past and the future occupied every thought—of the present he recked nothing.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Have you never found your mind darkened like the sunny landscape by the sudden cloud which augurs a coming tempest ? And thinkest thou not that such impulses are deserving of attention, as being the hints of our guardian spirits, that danger is impending ? ”

SCOTT.

THE hour was at half past ten, when Croiser's carriage gaining the summit of a hill, he beheld the well-known tower of Maker church. His pulse beat wildly at the sight, and as his eye rested on its venerable grey column he recalled the day when he had stood there with the daring Rannolini. A breeze came sweeping over the sea—Did he hear aright ? It bore the faint sound of a peal of bells. He listened ; it was silent—again—it was so ; he thought nothing however of the fact, though it awoke a strange feeling within. As he drew near, and the sounds became more distinctly audible, the idea gained ground on his mind, and he gave orders to the postillions to drive

for their lives. His expectation seemed wound up to the highest pitch, and he strained his eyes with the utmost eagerness and anxiety towards the church, as its steeple was now visible and now hid by the windings of the road ; the body of the building itself not being exposed to view.

At last they drew near to it. He discerned a crowd of gaily dressed people in the church-yard, as well as in the little walled meadow before it, forming the approach. At the gate opening into the latter, were a groupe of footmen on horse-back, wearing white favours in their hats, their looks directed down the winding road to the left, which led to an ancient gateway in the grounds of Mount Edgecumbe. On seeing this, Croiser's agitation reached its pitch. Scarcely conscious of what he did, he ordered his carriage to stop, and looked round for some one to answer those enquiries which he felt convinced would confirm all his fears !

On the right hand side stood a little cottage. Every thing about it was fastidiously neat, and the clustering woodbine and clematis outside bespoke the attention which had been given to them. " Hey ! within there !" shouted Croiser, once or twice, when an old man in a light blue coat with

steel buttons and small scratch wig made his appearance. "What means this ringing of bells and all those people loitering about?" demanded Croiser, in a tone of considerable agitation.

"Will ye speak a wee louder?" said the old man, hobbling up to the side of the carriage, and putting one hand up to his ear while he leant with the other on his stick. Croiser impatiently repeated his question. "The sense o't?" replied the informer, "Wha are ye that ye dinna ken this is my leddy Margarit's marriage morn, and nae doubt now that she's Mistress Pendervis that they're a' watching her ganging hame after the matter's ower." As Croiser heard this cruel piece of intelligence, every object around grew indistinct and faded from his view. He could only articulate the word "water," before he fell back insensible.

Tim, who had been watching matters very minutely, now fully comprehended what was going on, and muttering to himself, "A reglar ould Sal Moffat affair over again!" he jumped from behind his master's carriage, got the required beverage, and springing into the cottage, seized the first basin on the chimney-piece. Having dipped this into a vessel of clean water,

he hurried out to his master. In executing this manœuvre, however, he had taken the basement of all the fine superstructure of cup and saucers standing on the mantel-piece, which now falling, strewn the ground.

“Wae’s me! wae’s me!” exclaimed an old bel-dame, in the shrill tones of surprise, thus aroused from her nap by the fire. “I wadna for the hale warld this sul’d ha’ been. What will the gude man say?” But this was speedily resolved by his appearance at the door; attracted by the clatter, he arrived in time to behold the goodly utensils strewn in fragments on the ground.

“The foul fiend drive ye, ye lang tailed ne’er ending limb o’ the de’il, see what ye hae done?—if ye have na coupit to the grund—”

“Hold your jaw, you old fool, and move out of the way!” answered Tim, angrily, putting him aside, “to stand piping there about a halfpenny worth of crockery! Why I might have broken every bit in Sal Moffat’s shop, afore she’d have let a Christian and a gentleman perish for a glass of water. And now I think of Sal, sure enough, he’d be the better for a little drop of something short! He wouldn’t have been as he is now, if he’d gone on more like a rashional person.”

Having, in pursuance of this idea, dashed some hollands into the water, and succeeded in getting his master to take it, Tim looked up and observed a procession of carriages advancing at some little distance along the road before mentioned.

“ Well, your honour,” said he, “ I don’t know how they manage these things down here ; but if the matter’s clinched, I don’t see the use of cruising back to church again. Time to make all sail then, according to my way o’ reckoning. Howsomever here they come.” Croiser looked up ; Tim certainly was in the right, and he desired him to enquire once more inside the cottage. Tarpaulin, with his usual sagacity, put a handful of coin down on the table to pay for the damage he had occasioned, and asked the question once more.

Jamie—for I need scarcely say it was himself who had lately retired from office on a comfortable superannuation—repeated his story, but the gudewife interrupted him. “ Na, na, gude-mon, ye maunna tell the gentlemen sae, for it’s a’thegither wrang. Married indeed ! They’re no to be married till eleven o’clock, and it will na be chappit for twal minutes or thereby.” Tarpaulin hastened to convey this different version to Croiser, who, though he was ill able to stand, left his car-

riage on the moment, directed Tarpaulin to get into it, drive back some two hundred yards out of sight, and wait till he should join him. This done he hastened forward before the principal part of the cavalcade came in view.

Every object around him seemed unchanged—there stood the old and odd little building used as a stable for the horses of the church-going parishioners, with its peaked gables and turretted coping; and beside it the gamekeeper's cottage, while in the adjoining churchyard were seen its aged tombstones, coming brightly forth in the sunbeams—the surrounding view, the ancient edifice itself—all seemed familiar to him except the sensations of his own bosom!

Passing to the left of the church, he hurriedly ascended a flight of steps that led to a small gallery well suited to his purpose. The door was locked. Too impatient to wait for the key, he gave it a violent blow with his foot, the frail security gave way, and he entered unseen, the attention of the gazers being riveted on the party then entering the gate of the meadow.

Having again secured the entrance in the best way he could to prevent intrusion, Croiser descended to the lowest seat, and seating himself in

the corner against the wall, prepared to endure the agony of beholding the woman whom he tenderly and devotedly adored, bestow her hand and person on another ! Much as he had felt, deeply as he had suffered during the long and trying interval of suspense, it was trifling in comparison with the throes that shook his emaciated frame. But for the horrid feeling within, he could not have believed that he was there—about to see Margarita married to a stranger ! Yet what course ought he to pursue ?—A few minutes' reflection convinced him that to reveal himself could only tend to harrow up the soul of Margarita ; since he knew her firmness of disposition too well to dream for a single instant, that she would retract when it had gone thus far : besides the day of probation had expired nearly a month since, and she had given him to understand that she would marry immediately consequent on the expiration of the term. Then on the contrary, he recalled the explanation which he had to give—the fact that he was returned unfettered by Rannolini, and that for her sake he had for ever abandoned the enterprize which she so deeply condemned. As these vain hopes arose to bewilder him, he was about to start up, fling himself before her, pray for a brief delay, re-

veal all, and claim tat his involuntary absence should not be allowed against him. But hark ! The doors were thrown open, and the bridal party entered !

The nave had been covered with cloth, and their footsteps were therefore inaudible. The first figure that Croiser's eyes discovered, was the Port Admiral in full dress : upon his arm there leant a female figure ; but it was too mean—too short for Margarita Salisbury ! and yet—those robes of white satin bespangled with pearls bespoke the bride ! Again, it tottered ! and trembled almost to sinking, even on the arm of the venerable old officer !—Presently they came more fully into view—No—that fragile form, though bent and haggard, was far too slight for age !—They approached the altar—she took her stand, turned, looked up—the light fell on her countenance and did indeed reveal to Croiser's maddened gaze, the faded lineaments of her who was the beloved of his soul—Yes, it was no other than Margarita, her careworn cheek streaming with tears !

Scarcely could Croiser contain himself as he viewed that countenance so sadly altered since last he beheld it ; to his mind, it told of far deeper

anguish than even that which had wrung it in starvation!—Every scene of the past at once rushed on his memory, and he shook like one under the influence of the ague.

“Oh, Heaven!” he mentally exclaimed, “Wretch that I am, have I indeed deserved this torturing punishment? If so—then have my enormities been great indeed! To think that I should have existed to experience this hour, when her eyes can behold and yet fail to recognize me!”

Muffled up, however as he was, in his large French cloak, with his ample travelling cap slouched over his eyes, it would indeed have been a difficult thing for his dearest friend to have penetrated his disguise, much less the lovely victim who stood at the altar, while all her thoughts and affections were with him, whom she fancied far off in a foreign land! Her eyes wandered round the church it is true, and they saw the strange and lonely figure sitting in that little gallery; but her mind was too intensely pre-occupied to be conscious of any thing which passed before her sight.

The service now began, and Croiser found himself voiceless from agitation bordering on frenzy, unable to collect his thoughts so as to form the

barest idea of what he ought to do. He could only now sit frantically gazing at the prize now drawn from his reach for ever!

The minister who performed the service, possessed a remarkably clear voice, and what was rather unusual, read the solemn ceremonial in a distinct tone, every word of which Croiser heard, and felt it like a poignard planted in his breast. As for Margarita she no longer appeared to be the same being as the Margiée of former days; her polished energy, her spirit, her gentle determination, seemed gone; as if struck down by the long continuance of the dreadful storm that had poured its fury over her, she was now like the crushed reed—never to rise more! It was by her vainly stifled sobs alone, that she offered any interruption to the ceremony. Her father was at her elbow trying to console her, while the bridegroom pronounced the responses in a manner, that for a fox-hunter was quite feeling.

Several times did Croiser attempt to utter some sound—some exclamation that might attract the attention of the bride, but his nerveless tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of his mouth; his faithless lips mutely refused to obey their office. Still the service proceeded. Hope swiftly flying

from poor Croiser's breast, or only lingering to suggest that the pangs which now agonized him, might haply be those of a breaking heart.

The solemn charge was quickly finished, and neither had affirmed any impediment to exist between them, when the priest proceeded to address the bridegroom, requiring at his hands the several conditions of the holy state. Pendervis in his usually imperturbable voice, answered "I will." Then turning to the weeping bride, the clergyman repeated the appropriate question, asking whether she would "obey him and serve him, love, honour, and keep him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, keep herself only unto him, as long as they should live?" With glaring eyeballs, Croiser listened to each particle of this solemn address, till unable any longer to sit silent, he started up, dashed his hands wildly to his forehead, and before the slightest murmur of assent could fall from her lips, the sacred building re-echoed to the agonized groan that forced its way from his breast; while his cap fell heavily on the pews below. The clergyman pitying Margarita's distress, and considering it to be the mere and usual results of bashfulness and confusion, was whispering in her ear the necessary response

“I will,” but startled at the noise, she looked up; with the utmost rapidity of thought, she recognized Croiser’s anxious, haggard countenance, no longer concealed by his cap, and wildly shrieking forth “*No, never!*”—fell back into her father’s arms. Quick as lightning, Croiser leapt on the pews below, and springing to the rails of the altar, was in another second by her side. As for the Port Admiral himself, he seemed less astounded than his daughter, but as the latter demanded all his care, and divided his attention, he would only exclaim as he supported her in his arms, “Quick, here—quick! some water for your lives! Heaven defend me—Captain Croiser, is it you? Bear a hand I say, with some water—Lady Sapphira—ladies—bride’s maids—quick! Margarita’s dying! It’s all your fault! Croiser, the plagues of Egypt on it—dropping from the sky in that way without so much as saying stand from under. See! she’s coming-to, hold up her head, Croiser! Where, in the name of Fortune, did ye come from—I can’t think for the life of me! How are ye now, Margiée, darling? Devilish imprudent of you, though I’m glad to see you once more. I thought there was something between the pair of you. Bear a hand I say, there on the right! open that window,

and let the air in. Shift her head a little more yet—Croiser, so.” Obeying these last instructions, but unheeding Sir Richard’s other ejaculations, Croiser tenderly watched over the beloved sufferer, as consciousness returned. She revived—she saw those cherished features anxiously looking into her’s for recognition, as she had seen them once before, and putting forth her arms as if to satisfy herself that it was no cheat of her disordered brain, she drew her cheek to his, and convinced of the reality, burst into tears of joy. This quick transition so much alarmed her father, that he insisted on replacing her in the carriage immediately, and waiting for an explanation of this extraordinary scene until they reached the house.

“ And pray, sir, who may you be ?” demanded Pendervis, on finding himself left with Croiser in the church porch, while the rest of the bridal-party in the utmost astonishment had returned with the bride to Mount Edgecumbe House, and as he made this demand, anger and amazement scarcely left him proper utterance.

Feeling for his situation, and his heart overflowing with joy at the hopes fresh dawning on it, Croiser paused a moment, and then determining to be candid himself, and rely on the generosity

of his rival, took him aside and briefly said,—“ I have not the honour of knowing you, Mr. Pendervis, save by name, but the clue to what you have just witnessed is simply this:—I was promised the honour of Miss Salisbury’s hand on certain conditions, which I was to answer on the date of to-day a month since. In default of fulfilling them, I was to be rejected for some happier suitor, since proved to be yourself. Accidents which I shall ever deplore, withheld me from claiming the lady’s promise within the stated time. I only arrived here this morning—our interview was wholly accidental, and I need not add that you are acquainted with the result!”

The rage which overspread the features of Pendervis gradually cooled down during this open statement, into a fixed expression of offended pride, and muttering something about being made a fool, he bowed stiffly and strode through the church down the adjoining meadow towards his carriage, with a pace which would not have disgraced the Cornish giant. Having, for the sake of greater speed, mounted the first horse he could get from one of his grooms, he did not condescend to return to the house of his late intended, but rode off at full gallop in the direction of his own seat.

CHAPTER XVI.

Fixed to no spot is happiness sincere ;
'Tis no where to be found, or every where :
'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And fled from monarchs, St. John dwells with thee."

POPE.

My history is now fast drawing to an end, and gratitude to my reader, who has accompanied me thus far, as well as policy in not protracting the details beyond the interest of the narrative, both demand that I should relate the events which followed as briefly as is consistent with that high dignity which should ever pre-eminently distinguish us naval historians. The Port Admiral having seen that his daughter was properly cared for, seized the earliest moment of asking an explanation from Croiser. The latter repeated to him nearly the same story as that which he had communicated to Pendervis, but much to Sir Richard's

surprise he shunned all allusion to himself as regarded birth or family.

“ Well, well,” said Sir Richard, resuming the conversation after the first pause, “ whip me but I thought if I knew any thing about these matters that there was something between you and Margiée, but dear little puss! she wouldn’t let out that it was so. Well, well, I’m right glad to hear it—but, by the by, there’s Pendervis—” At this moment the servant entered with a letter. Sir Richard broke it open. It ran thus :

“ SIR,

“ After the events of this morning, I must tell you that I consider every thought of the contemplated union between our families at an end.

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ CHAS. PENDERVIS.”

“ Oh, oh ! the bear’s in a huff, and a jolly good thing that he is, for it saves us a plaguy mess o’ trouble. So now, Croiser, my boy, the day’s all your own, and as I was going to say—give me your hand upon it. I’d fifty to one rather have you for a son-in-law than that stiff lubber, and so’d Margiée too, that’s as clear as may be. I must say, I should

have been sorry to have had no one to take the 'Sir' after me, since it's been so long afloat in the family, and my poor little gipsy—dear Chatty—is—God grant she may soon come round again, as well as Nat,—poor brother Nat,—”

“ But I had always imagined, Sir Richard, that your nephew was your heir—Mr. Nathaniel's son at sea,” remarked Croiser, in a careless tone, endeavouring to lead the good old officer from so distressing a subject as the other.

“ Ah, poor fellow !” returned the Port Admiral, with a sigh, and a look that shewed there was much that was unpleasant lurking beneath the remembrance. “ Why, ye see, I'll tell ye how that was,” placing his hand on Croiser's arm, as was his manner when about to indulge in a long story, and drawing him towards the window that overlooked the grounds :

“ My poor nephew, Frank, was as fine a young fellow as ever you'd wish to fall in with. Somewhat harum scarum it may be, and a trifle wild now and then, but nothing to speak about in a young fellow like him. But let that stand. Brother Nat, who you know, isn't one of the best temper'd fellows that a man might care to lay hold of in the dark, took offence at something poor Frank

did at college, where Nat insisted on training him up for a parson against his will. I forget now what was the exact offence, for I happened to be at sea then, but I know they had a regular breeze which ended in Frank's being shipped off to sea without his leave. Brother Nat I must say didn't act all fair and above board in that business, for Frank never had any great love for the sea, so what must they do but set him on board the M——, leave him as if for a few minutes in the captain's cabin, and then slip on shore. Presently the ship began to get under weigh and Frank found himself detained, entered on the ship's books by Jove, and bound for India! 'Twas a rascally hard case, and so I've often told Nat to serve the lad in that way, and quite enough to make him hate the service, which he did directly, and wrote home to the Admiralty to complain, and ask for his discharge, but as the captain would not forward his letter, and it went through a private hand which you know is an informal channel, why ye see they would never take notice of this application, which made poor Frank vow vengeance against them, though he never lived to take it. However, to shorten a long story, he boxed about from one ship to another—bad to worse, until he got with

Admiral Sir ———, and a pretty tartar he turned out to be! He would persist in bringing his cursed leaky old ship home from Bombay, and the end of it was she went down !”

“ And your nephew ?”

“ Ah—poor fellow! We’ve never heard a word about any of them, all hands perished! Some said off the Isle of France, some not so far from India, but who’s to tell I should like to know! I suppose it was one of your regular tornadoes, for there was a little brig in company and she never made any land either! Ah, Frank would have been a fine fellow by this time; though to be sure, I don’t suppose that I recollect much about him, seeing he was no higher than the maintopmast fid—a mere youngster when I set eyes on him last—years before they kidnapped him in that fashion. If I’d been at home they shouldn’t have done it. His mother was a good hearted soul as ever lived—she never got over it! She broke her heart within a year and a half after his being sent off, and I don’t think brother Nat hasn’t been comfortable in his mind since it’s supposed she foundered. Yes, if Frank had only lived he’d have been my heir as you say, and he’d have been more; his mother’s only

brother, the Earl of —, has no children, so Frank would have succeeded to the title. Though he hated the service cordially enough, yet he was a capital seaman, I'm told—ye see he'd a famous long head of his own, and take to what he might, it seemed to come like second nature to him—the last letter must have reached him at Bombay before he sailed."

"And your letter conveyed to him the first news of his poor mother's death?"

"Yes, it did!" replied the Port Admiral, much surprised at the question.

"That packet also contained the miniature of his mother?"

"Why—how—what the dickens could make you guess that? But I believe you're right now; I did send her miniature in that packet. I suppose you thought it was but natural, and so it was, she being very fond of him, and he of her. She gave it to me for him on her death-bed—poor dear soul!"

"And that letter, moreover, contained an assurance from you, that if your nephew went on well, you would use all your interest to get him promoted, on the instant that his time had expired?" At this question, displaying Croiser's

knowledge of the letter, Sir Richard looked up in his face with an air of utter bewilderment, then with strong emotion scrutinized the lineaments before him. Unheeding this, our hero continued, "And this portrait was set in gold, with rubies and diamonds, while the back of it lifting up, displayed a lock of her hair, besides having a gold chain attached to it. Was it not so, Sir Richard?"

The old veteran drew back from Croiser a couple of paces, seemingly aghast, as in great agitation he muttered something that was not heard.

"Is this the same miniature as that you mention?" asked Croiser, pulling forth a locket that corresponded exactly with the foregoing description.

The Port Admiral gazed most intently on the fair features for a few seconds. "Merciful Father! Save us alive—'tis the very same!—and this must be he. Save me, Heaven! Heart alive, my dear Frank, can this indeed be you!"—and flying into each other's arms, Sir Richard and his nephew—for it was no less—warmly embraced, giving way, without restraint, to all the joyful feelings of that moment.

Their first transports over, Croiser's story was eagerly demanded, and he complied with the request. As the reader, however, has no doubt long since recognized in Croiser the prisoner of the poop, introduced to his notice in the first volume, it will only be necessary to describe that part of his narrative which related to his adventures subsequent to the foundering of the seventy-four, as already related; when the mutinous but ill-fated crew followed to the bottom of the ocean the Admiral who had so cruelly oppressed them.

"The mast having been struck by the lightning and fallen overboard," continued Croiser—henceforth to be known as Frank Salisbury—"I found myself suddenly plunged into the waves, death on every side of me, and not a human soul to sympathise in my sufferings, or stimulate me on to try and save my life, except poor Tom Collins, who by the by, my dear Uncle, is no other than your old favourite, Tim Tarpaulin—Nine-fathom-Tim."

"Odds Bobs alive! Is that Tim? Bless his old heart! May I be set adrift in my old age, like a marine on a grating, if ever he shall want for a glass of grog, or a shot in the locker. So that was Tim. Bless his old soul! I had an inkling of it. Well, heave a

head, Frank. Dang it, if I don't feel myself quite a youngster again!" "Yes, that was Tim, and as soon as ever we came to the surface again, after the first plunge, the first thing that we could distinguish, was Tim, without his little squat hat, clinging to the wreck, as he himself would have said, 'like a young grey hound to his breakfast.' He soon observed me, and coming close alongside, sang out, 'Cheer up, Mr. Salisbury, cheer up, and take a drop o' something short!—we've hard weather of it, a long voyage before us, and but a poor craft to get way on, but there's hopes yet, for I managed to fill Sal Moffat afore we were shoved off from alongside in that sudden manner!' At such a moment, you may conceive how precious was a little spirit, and it needed no second invitation to make me take the proffered dram, which seemed as though it were a fresh sip of life."

"Ah! it's wonderful what freshening the nip will do, as you say. There was once, I remember—but I beg pardon, Frank—I forget—heave a-head with *your* yarn first. 'Mine 'll keep good for a twelvemonth to come.'" "Well, then, having shared Tim's dram, we made the most of a bad matter by dragging ourselves along the mast, till we came under the lee of the top. There we lashed ourselves securely; in such a manner, that not

more than our heads and shoulders were exposed to the wind, while the rest of our bodies being under water, and the latter not very cold, we thought we could weather it out better than we could have expected. Now that it is over, it is a source of idle gratification to me, to think that I have experienced so wild, so grand, so tremendous a scene!—but never do I hope to be exposed to such another—words are not adequate to describe that night. The tempest swept over us in one of those terrific hurricanes, so dreaded in that region. Never could I have formed the slightest idea of what size the billows were, unless I had been borne on their bosom, and sunk into their trough; now swept up on their topmost crests—our almost lifeless hearts trembling and palpitating within us, as we hung looking into the dark and apparently fathomless caverns of the ocean, that yawned beneath and then plunged headlong into the watery abyss, its horrid element roaring and hissing in our ears with ten thousand notes of death; while looking up from this hideous valley of the sea, we beheld its threatening and swelling mountains rise on either side of us, shutting out hope and life, and seemingly about to bury us in its dreadful flood.

My first fear was that we should be separated; at that moment I felt that Collins's life was equally dear to me with my own, for had I lost him, I should no longer have possessed any spirits to strive for life, amid such a scene of universal desolation. A few minutes, however, sufficed to accustom us so far to the horrors of our situation, that we became less apprehensive. My thoughts next reverted to the direful struggle of which I had been a witness, and pity filled my mind for the unfortunate people I had left on board the ship. First among those thus recalled to my mind was Mrs. Somers, and the more so, that I had neglected obeying her injunction of consigning to the waves the paper that would announce her fate, for this I now looked on as inevitable. In the meanwhile the wind acting on the hull of the seventy-four, had caused her to drift near us, and as we rose on each succeeding wave, we could plainly see her pitching to and fro just ahead of us, a complete wreck! Once, as we thus caught a sight of the old ship, we thought we observed a person leap overboard, and in a few minutes we felt the mast to which we were lashed, suddenly strike some other spar. On looking round, we beheld the wreck of one of her top-

masts, to which were clinging the all but lifeless bodies of Mrs. Somers and her child. The preservation of the latter we soon found to be hopeless, but Tarpaulin having succeeded in lashing the former safely to our mast, succeeded in getting her to 'take a drop of something short,' which enabled nature and life to struggle on.

"While thus employed, we suddenly beheld a blueish glare of light, a sort of halo surround the seventy-four, and in a few minutes the flames shot out in all directions; their lambent points flickering in the blast, and casting their ruddy gleams upon the raging waters. Now tost toward Heaven—now sunk in the hollow of the billows, that sad beacon of fire, amid darkness of the tempest, was, I think, the most imposing sight I ever beheld! While we were commiserating the unfortunate victims on board, and asking ourselves how long it was likely she would continue to burn, we beheld her fall over on her broadside—the glare shot upwards, and we were alone upon the wild tumultuous ocean. You may imagine our horror at this consummation of the dire events of the night. So great a charm has sympathy, that we felt the terrors of our situation redoubled; but as love of life is a natural instinct, we still held to the mast,

and endeavoured to survive as long as might be permitted to us, which however the most sanguine did not expect to be much more than a few minutes. Our astonishment, or I should rather say, our gratitude, or both, was great indeed, when in a quarter of an hour we were sensible of a very considerable moderation in the tempest. It continued to abate with astonishing rapidity, and the luminous appearance beheld on the former night again became visible around one half of the horizon. I now remembered that it must be close upon the hour of midnight, and that possibly we might be about to behold the strange phenomenon of the ripples once more. The wind continued to subside with vast rapidity, and in half an hour the waves were rolling heavily along without a breath to fan their surface. The luminous appearances in the heavens increased. The ripples succeeded in all their former dazzling grandeur and we seemed to be tossed on billows of molten fire! Never was any sight so awfully magnificent, but the sense of suffocation was still more intense than on the preceding night. The ripples past, the calm continued, and with fresh hopes we waited for the dawn. About an hour before sun-rise, the sluggish atmosphere was quickened

by a gentle breeze. This proved most refreshing ; at length the sun rose, and conceive our joy when we descried a sail to windward coming down with a flowing sheet in the very direction in which we were. Not to be prolix, however, she came sufficiently near to perceive us ; hove to, and picked us up ; sufficiently exhausted to feel all the blessings of such a deliverance, and sufficiently sensible to perceive that we had fallen into the hands of a French letter of marque.

“ This somewhat abated our happiness, it is true, but any thing in a human shape was at such a moment too dear to permit of our being particular as to the nation to which it might belong.

“ Before being rescued, however, we had solemnly agreed never on any account to divulge the true story of the mutiny, since Tarpaulin—or Collins I should rather say—was so deeply implicated in it that his life was in danger, as was also mine ; since I had not attempted to assist the admiral, and as he had written home to state that he had ordered me for a court-martial, there were additional motives that determined me to preserve a strict secrecy respecting the eventful proceedings of that night.

“ To the questions, therefore, of our preservers,

I merely replied that we belonged to a British man-of-war—giving her name—that we had fallen overboard with the mast, which had been struck by lightning during the tornado of the preceding evening, and had been miraculously saved, but that we believed our ship to have gone down.

“ This account seemed to satisfy their curiosity, Tarpaulin could not betray the secret as he did not speak French, and Mrs. Somers had no sooner reached the ship in safety, than she swooned and was carried below to be tended with the greatest care. As soon as she was sensible, I put her on her guard, and she never allowed herself to forget that Tarpaulin’s life and mine depended on her silence.”

“ Well, poor soul! that’s a wonder too for a woman, and what became of her baby, Frank?”

“ Ah! that was a cause of the bitterest grief to her. The child was undoubtedly dead when we fell in with her—for she had in the madness of the moment leaped overboard from the burning wreck and got hold of the spar, on which we found her by the merest accident; but she would insist on retaining its lifeless body till washed from her arms by a ruthless wave, and then it sank before her eyes, leaving her utterly inconsolable, so frantic

in her grief that it required all Tarpaulin's strength to prevent her from plunging after it to the bottom."

"Poor creature! ah Frank! we little know the extent of a mother's affection for her children. And what became of her then?"

"I am about to tell you. Despite of our unceasing prayers that we might be captured by some English cruiser, the letter of marque most perversely reached France in safety, and we were declared prisoners of war. However we were liberated on parole through the interest of the captain, whom I had contrived to make my friend, and after continuing in France some short time longer, I contracted so many agreeable acquaintances that I had no wish to come to England, more especially since I still felt exceedingly sore at the conduct of my poor father, and could not well declare my identity, without occasioning an inquiry respecting Admiral —— and his ship, which might have proved exceedingly troublesome, if not dangerous. Perhaps you may wonder why I, who was already a prisoner on parole, should not wish to return to my country, but the fact was I had made such interest at court, that I might have obtained my unrestricted liberty if I had been so inclined;

indeed I did obtain a promise of this favour for Mrs. Somers, but the peace occurring at the moment, set her at liberty immediately.

The plan which she was to pursue, had been arranged between us. I accompanied her to England, when she took the name of Mrs. Rayner, passing as a widow whose husband was supposed to have died in India. We soon contrived to trace out her husband, who very luckily had not remarried, and taking him into our confidence, he consented, after his raptures at the restoration of his long-mourned and still beautiful wife had subsided, to follow up the execution of our little plot: it was this. Captain Somers, the disconsolate widower came up to London on leave of absence from his country, he happened *by the merest accident* (of course) to lodge in the same boarding-house with the young and handsome widow Rayner. He saw—loved—and married her! His brother officers on being introduced to the object of his choice, admired his taste, passed the due number of jokes on the disconsolate widower's susceptibility, but never dreamed that they were a faithful pair re-united after a sad and trying separation. As she had not a single friend in England, and he had first married her in India, *their*

secret remains undiscovered till this hour, and what is more, *my* secret undivulged. In a few days I promise you a corroboration of this strange story from her own lips, since she is the same Mrs. Somers, who is the friend of Margarita, and who you may remember to have fainted very sillily on suddenly seeing me ~~at~~ your fête."

"Is it possible, Frank? Mercy on us! I do remember,—but why, after bringing her to England, didn't you contrive to find us out?"

"Why really, my dear good uncle, you must not consider me spiteful; but I confess I did feel too much hurt at my father's treatment. However I heard that you were all here, so as I had promised to return to France, and bring over a friend to England, I thought I might as well come to reconnoitre the coast, and find out what sort of folks you were. That friend was Rannolini, with whom I was engaged in some mad prank, which as it is for ever at an end, is not worth the mentioning, for happening you see, my dear uncle, to fall in love with my amiable and exquisite cousin, she discovered the connection between us, and gave me the choice of renouncing her or Rannolini within six months. Having pledged

my word to my friend, this determination of Margarita placed me in a situation which I hope never to experience again! Fortune, however, has enabled me to extricate myself without loss of honour, though at the expense of friendship. I regret, deeply regret the fatal accidents that delayed me so much beyond the appointed day, while, at the same time, I cannot express to you my delight that I have arrived sufficiently soon to throw for the last chance of the prize, and to become a humble suitor to you, my dearest uncle, for the hand of your lovely daughter.”—

“ ‘A *humble* suitor,’ my own boy?—my long lost Frank?” interrupted the Port Admiral, once more embracing his nephew with the greatest transport, “I wouldn’t have had the darling girl marry any one else for all Christendom! I do believe if ye’d made your number a quarter of an hour later, ’twould have broke my heart; and I know twouldn’t have fared much better with Margarita; but as to that dull proud fellow Pendervis, the Cornish boor!—I’ll let him see that he’s taken at his word! ‘Connection with my family at an end’ indeed?—By Jove! if it wasn’t that it’s past noon, and dear Margiée is too poorly for the exertion of

the plan, I do believe I'd trot back to the church directly, and see you two spliced at once—Heaven shower blessings on the pair of you!”

“ Ah, but my dear uncle, you forget, we have to obtain the consent of the lady.”

“ Hah! ha! ha! never fear, my boy, we'll soon have that! I've made up my mind to a marriage and a regular built jollification; and take my word for it, I'm not to be cozened out of my bride cake in that manner; so come with me directly, and see Margiée on the subject: I dare say she's nearly recovered herself by this time—Her bridemaids were all attending to her very kindly, though I thought that they seemed to miss the wedding rather. However Frank, my dear boy, if they've missed the sprat they caught the mackerel; and I bring them a better bridegroom than ever they could find in Cornwall! Mind, Frank, how you break the news to Margiée, that you're her own cousin whom she used to sigh for so often.”

“ Nay, did she indeed.”

“ Ay, to be sure she did; but come Frank, come along—you're in love you know, and when once ye begin a yarn of that sort, there's no ending it.” But the reader will, I am sure, gladly excuse me as well as himself from going minutely over the

scene which took place between Margarita and her restored lover—no longer the fearful and mysterious Croiser, but the adored and cherished suitor who had given up every thing for her love; the long lost and happily restored representative of her house.

Still the undeviating principles which had ever been the guide of her conduct threw some seeming difficulties in the path of her marriage with her beloved cousin. He had not returned within the time specified, and she had given her word and pledged her hand to another; but on reconsideration she found that his delay was owing solely to accident, and that her hand had been absolutely refused by the more lawful claimant; and, moreover, it was her father's wish she should immediately accept Frank's offer, which decision was also strongly favoured by another party of no inconsiderable weight—her own affections.

With bashful joy, she now yielded her consent; but prayed for some delay. Sir Richard would not hear of this, and declared that unless her physicians interposed with their veto, the next morning was the furthest hour that he would allow them. Croiser seconded this pro-

posal most warmly, adding that he was very anxious to leave the neighbourhood, as he had reasons to believe himself suspected on account of Rannolini; and here he mentioned their flight from London.

This last reason was conclusive. Fearful lest any circumstances should again arise to cloud their prospects, she lost no time in causing every preparation to be made for their departure.

At half-past eleven, on the ensuing morning, they found themselves *tête-à-tête*, in their travelling carriage; while their four horses were rapidly conveying them to a noble estate of Sir Richard's in Sussex; having been married very quietly at Mount Edgecumbe House by special license, to avoid as much as possible the idle chatter which so sudden and singular a wedding would create.

After the first embarrassments had in some degree subsided, Margarita found time to question him on many points which she wished to have more fully elucidated. Frank, however, being aware that ladies are particularly given to the most minute enquiries, and seldom let one off without demanding every point which does belong, and very many points which do not belong to any

story which they may have heard, at once recommenced the narrative which he had already communicated to the Port Admiral, and which I, most gentle and puissant reader, have communicated to you. As, however, he had thought it prudent not to wound his uncle's feelings, by disclosing to him the rash and revengeful scheme in which he had embarked with Rannolini, his second and true narration differed from his first in many particulars which were thus extracted from him.

"But tell me, dearest Frank, said Margarita, how did you first become acquainted with this Rannolini?"

"Why, have I not told you already, Margiée?"

"No, you seemed to pass it over."

"Well then, simply thus. On being first brought prisoner to France, we were allowed, as a very great favour, to proceed to Paris on our parole; and here, as you are aware, such a system of espionage is kept up, both by means of a public and private police, that the authorities, not content with knowing every word which you utter, endeavour to go a step further, and discover every thought which you may entertain. Now it so happened once or twice at the restaurateur's, which I was in the habit of frequenting,

that I had been led into a discussion on the system of discipline in the British navy; and having fearlessly expressed my opinion as to its execrable and unnecessary tyranny, my sentiments had immediately found their way to M. Rannolini, who sent for me, questioned me as to my ship and the length of time which I had served; the state of the British navy; the causes which I might have for disliking it; and above all, as to my family. At first I was not sufficiently imprudent to communicate to him anything of consequence, nor would say much respecting my family; but after several interviews, he so won upon my confidence—and you know how fascinating are his manners when he likes—that I informed him of every thing, not even excepting the mutiny. He no sooner learned that my connections were noble, than he redoubled all his efforts to bring me over to his views; and by working on my pride, resentment, thirst for revenge, and ambition of distinction; he at length persuaded me to join him in his projects for the invasion of Britain. It being of the first importance that he should appear as the ally of the people, and the conqueror of their government alone, I was to command his fleet with the rank

of Vice-admiral, and thus hold out to the English navy an additional motive for joining us. We should instantly have issued a proclamation, stating that the rank of every officer who came to our standard would be advanced one step, and the pay of every seaman doubled. This we had determined to do, calculating that the old officers would hold out the longest for the government, in which case they were to be cashiered. And, indeed, with the capital in his hands, the most loyal hearts would not long have remained firm against a stoppage of their pay; particularly as the possession of the metropolis would speedily have been followed by the occupation of the seaports; thus shutting out the commanding officers from the possibility of recruiting their ships: in which case the crews would soon have mutinied, and brought them in to declare their allegiance to the new form of government."

"Merciful heavens be praised, for saving you from such an enormity of crime!" ejaculated Margarita, shuddering at this horrid picture of civil war. "But are you sure that this dreadful Rannolini will not be able to effect his object now?"

"No, Margarita, your fatal charms have for

many years ruined the mighty projects of his gigantic genius! I now see that he was right in saying so. I cannot help feeling some remorse at having thus been made the means of levelling his stupendous structures with the dust. But I was so distracted by different feelings, and am even now, when I reflect on it, that I know not what to do! The image of yourself had so entirely absorbed my thoughts, that my judgement was confounded. It will most likely happen as he has foretold; those very fleets which, had I been cool enough to have performed my duty—would have misled the English, and thereby gained a clear command of the channel for six weeks, while we effected—and without doubt we should have done it—the conquest of the island, will now fall a prey to their enemies, and all Rannolini's sad forebodings be realized! Besides in future, our government will see through his deep-laid scheme and guard against it. However, to return, I agreed to second Rannolini, and he promised to exert himself to the utmost to gain for me the first post—whatever it might be—in the new order of affairs about to be introduced into this country; in return for my services and the use of

my name. He then gave me a private passport, which ordered all French cruisers to respect me as a most confidential officer of their government, and forward my views to the utmost. I came immediately to England, and repairing to the minister, assumed a feigned name, gave him some private information which he was anxious to learn, and with which Rannolini himself had furnished me, and then signified my readiness to engage in his secret service, taking care to make every part of my story agree. The minister at first doubted, but I so played my cards, that he afterwards came into my scheme with avidity, furnished me with a passport for the English vessels, similar to the one which Rannolini had given me for the French, and the consequence was that I have continued ever since a privileged agent between these high belligerent parties. It was this facility which tempted Rannolini to make his daring visit. Now that it is accomplished, I look back upon it with the utmost astonishment. It certainly is most fortunate that Pitt saw no reason to suspect me; he will be wondering at my absence, but I shall take care that some indefinite rumours shall reach him of my being lost at sea."

“ But that Rannolini, Francis, do you not fear lest rage at your flight should lead him to denounce you ? ”

“ No, he is violent, but I do not think spiteful ; besides, pride will for ever seal his lips as to my being the cause of his failure. I think I have acted rightly ; my conscience tells me so ; yet I cannot help feeling regret for his disappointment ! I certainly did, nay do, love him ! Notwithstanding his faults, and they are many, there is a greatness in his soul redeeming all ! ”

The above narrative having brought our friends to the termination of the first day's journey, and to the ancient city of Exeter, we shall merely premise, that they were now travelling for amusement, and in due time arrived at Sir Richard's beautiful estate, which, like Mount Edgecumbe, was near the sea.

The transition from agony to delight, soon wrought a miraculous improvement in the looks of our happy pair ; and the termination of the first months of their union, found them no less devoted to each other, than at the earliest hour. While Sir Richard's command as Port Admiral at Plymouth having expired, he proceeded to remove with his family and household gods, to the

abode which Frank and Margaret had prepared for their reception.

Every thing having been arranged for this departure, the morning at length arrived on which they had to bid a last farewell to the enchanting shores of The Crooked Valley*. It was about the hour of five, in the grey twilight of a March morning, that Sir Richard was aroused by his butler, who came with much perturbation to inform him, that Lady Sapphira had run off with Bombast, accompanied by Puff and the ladies'-maid, for Gretna Green, and the informant wished to know what steps should be taken to give chase, and bring the fugitives back.

“Gretna Green!” repeated Sir Richard, laughing heartily, and scarcely able to believe so ridiculous a story, “Ha, ha, ha!—They needn’t have wandered so far, for the matter of that, Hewson; for if they had a mind to this sort of sky-larking, there’s no one I’m sure would have taken the trouble to stop them—Gretna Green! Ha, ha, ha! Bear-a-hand, Hewson, and let’s be off before they come back—They’ll quarrel now before they get

* The Crooked Valley. It was once so called, and is the derivation from whence the eldest son, Lord Valletort, takes his title of courtesy.

there, and if not, why odds bobs ! we'd get well rid of three old fools together."

Great care having been taken in the removal of the two poor invalids, Charlotte and Nathaniel ; Sir Richard at length reached Sussex in safety ; where, in the arms of his beloved children, he prepared to establish himself for life, consoled by their kind and unceasing attentions, for the loss which he had sustained in the still continued illness of his youngest daughter. Lady Sapphira having been duly united to the object of her choice, the marvellous Captain ; the delightful trio—for Puff now adhered to his friend more closely than ever, spent some little time "abroad at Cork," and then domesticated themselves in the literary purlieus of Brompton, where they occupied their time in a fresh manufacture of their wanderings to be entitled "The Marvellous Travels of Captain and Lady Bombast, here, there, and every where ; now first collected and arranged by the parties, and illustrated by the Notes of Major Puff, &c. &c. "It was thus," as her ladyship observed, "that all people of mind should devote their existence to the informing of posterity, even although" she never failed to remark with a sigh, "'*Post cineres gloria sera venit.*'"

Nathaniel still continued to wander about in the same unhappy state of mind, harmless, though insensible; nor did he ever awake to a recognition of the son he had so harshly treated. As for poor Charlotte, she soon pined away and passed into that happy state of existence where we are beautifully told that "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!" The ethereal flame of life had indeed so wasted before it finally left the fragile form in which it had once so brilliantly glowed, that Francis, in whose arms she expired, scarcely perceived the exact moment, when the heavenly prisoner was emancipated from its incarceration in the clay. Her demise was a bitter stroke to them all, only alleviated by knowing that though they had deeply suffered, she had immeasurably gained. A suitable spot in the grounds was selected for consecration, and here they deposited the form which they had loved, while on the simple mausoleum raised above, the following lines, written by Francis, were engraved.

EPITAPH.

If beauty tempt thee, pause beside this tomb !
Hope's fairest flowret nipped in early bloom,
A vestal being, pure as mortal birth
Might leave an angel, moulders back to earth !

Change her sole fault, who now shall change no more,
Silent that wit that ne'er was hushed before;
Dimm'd those bright eyes that glanced with living light,
All, save her virtues, sunk in ceaseless night !
Those her young soul to glory's realm shall raise,
To meet with pardon, and to proffer praise !
—Grief shall not sully thy remembrance here,
Though aching hearts have followed at thy bier !
Resigned we leave thee 'neath the flowery sod,
In hopes to meet thee at the throne of God !

Good old Sir Richard now full of years and honour had no heavier occupation than that of finding amusement, which by the ready aid of Nine-fathom-Tim he seldom failed to do. They still occasionally took a share in a little "moonshine," and found never failing satisfaction in hearing and telling their mutual "yarns," which, however strange it may seem to say, though they infinitely multiplied, yet never grew worse.

For our hero, Croiser, alias Francis, it only remains to say that Philosophy and Reason had so tempered his ardent soul that he clearly perceived the crime and folly of building up for himself a monument of glory, the component parts of which were to be cemented with blood, and finally crowned with wretchedness ; the greater, because it is a species for which mankind have little sympathy and no compassion. The energies of his

mind were, thanks to Margarita! turned into a happier and a nobler channel, in which the long repressed affections of his soul might swell progressing in their course, until they attained those bounds which death has set to every thing of mortal birth.

In a few years he came to the undisputed possession of the title and estates to which he was the heir through his maternal connexion. The world, accustomed to know him as Sir Richard's acknowledged nephew and son-in-law, never dreamed that he had a secret to keep, touching his identity, while no one cared to trouble themselves whether a mere "midshipman" was lost in this ship or saved in the other. His days, devoted to the enlightenment of that spirit which he believed was to exist through a boundless eternity, in the same state of ignorance or knowledge in which death freed it from the earth, the affairs of this petty bubbling world soon ceased to excite feelings beyond indifference. Now and then perchance, in the holy twilight of a summer's evening, as he paced the ancient and monastic hall of the seat which he had inherited, the deep and solemn tones of the organ pealing from the choir above, would momentarily recall his former distempered dreams

A TALE OF THE WAR.

of glory and ambition, awakening a sigh for the past, and some slight regret for the alluring but treacherous path he had forsaken. In a few minutes however he would espy through the clustering columns that supported the gothic roof, the flowing drapery of Margarita. At that charmed sight the evil destinies of mankind had no further power over him, and in the wife of his bosom, he forgot that he had ever wooed a more fatal mistress.

Never guilty of the fooleries of society, and not valuing it sufficiently to court it; too wise to be eccentric, yet too independent to lose the features of his own character in the assumed manner of a set; his friendship was soon prized and his acquaintance esteemed. For the remainder of his life, its course was ever dictated by reason and principle, and followed by happiness and honour.

CHAPTER XVII.

" Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide.

* * * * *

Sager than in thy fortunes ;

* * * * *

'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose,

So hath it proved to thee—

* * * * *

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,

And there hath been thy bane :

* * * One breast laid open were a school

Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule."

" BUT there is yet," I hear some of my readers exclaim, " there is yet another character good Master Author, touching whom thou hast been unwarrantably silent." Courteous reader I understand you—it was some years after the happy consummation of things recorded in the last chapter, that Francis—now Earl of —, but it matters not to give his title—that Francis hurried to Margarita one morning, and informed her of some circumstances which required him on the instant

to depart express for London, whence, after the brief stay of an hour, he again set off at the same rapid rate for Devon. Having arrived at Plymouth—the place of his destination—late at night, he devoted the short space that remained till day-break to obtaining some slight repose, and at an early moment arose and embarked in one of the Admiral's barges for the Sound.

The hour was not much beyond nine o'clock, and the morning was brilliantly fine. As Croiser looked forth upon the bay around him, he thought that he never had beheld so superb a sight. As far almost as the eye could reach, the sea was covered with boats, until they seemed to form one continued and uninterrupted surface through which it was with the greatest difficulty that his barge could make way. The passengers with whom these boats were filled, were in general standing up to catch a sight of some object of great interest, to which the looks of all were directed. Even the hills which surrounded the bay seemed thronged with the gazing multitude. It appeared as if beholders had arrived from all parts of the world, to indulge themselves with a glimpse of some object which had never existed before, and never could exist again. The barge

having at length gained the middle of the Sound, approached the hull of a seventy-four lying quietly at anchor, while boats rowing guard in a circle around her, kept off the inquisitive spectators.

Our hero having been questioned by the officer of one of these row-boats, was permitted to approach under the stern of the man-of-war, until sufficiently near to reach the rope now let down over the taffrail. To this he fastened a letter for the captain, which was immediately drawn up. During this operation, the party below, perceived that they were strictly watched by an individual stationed at one of the cabin windows, whose pale expressive face, as he looked down upon them, betrayed the most eager anxiety.

In a few minutes the officer of the watch appeared on the taffrail above, and said that if the boat would pull round to the gangway, the captain would come down and speak to the officer in command. This having been done, and the captain having had a short conversation with Francis, they ascended the ship's side together. After waiting a few minutes on deck, where the sentries were all doubled, and the utmost possible vigilance used to prevent the escape of any one from the

ship, Francis, by way of precaution, was announced by title, and simply as an English nobleman, who had come to pay a visit, and ushered into the cabin of the seventy-four. In a few seconds he found himself left alone with the object of his journey, a foreigner somewhat past the prime of life, of small stature, but inclining to *embonpoint*. He was dressed in the uniform of the French Imperial Guard, and the decorations upon his breast proclaimed him to be of distinguished rank. His arms were folded on his breast, his hair touched with approaching age, fell thinly over a noble forehead, and his clear marked features wore a mingled expression of genius, melancholy, and suspicion, which caused a heart-ache in the beholder, speaking so plainly as it did, of past perils, present care, and that sad experience which forebodes misfortune to come.

Seeing that he was not recognized, and that the foreigner neither moved nor spoke, Francis knew not how to act, which the other, after minutely scanning with no common glance the features of his visitor, repeated his name as if unconsciously to himself. Suddenly his eyes brightened up with joy, as he extended his arms, saying "Croiser!

my own Croiser—is it you?” In another instant Francis and Rannolini—for it was he—were locked in a mutual embrace.

With the utmost avidity Rannolini now questioned his old friend as to all that had happened to him since their separation; but as this was a mere repetition of that which the reader already knows, it is unnecessary to insert it. Rannolini, then, spoke of the disasters which had happened to himself, and seemed to return with heartfelt pleasure to the fact of Croiser’s remaining faithfully attached to him, as he continued “But *you* have not deserted me!” and here his emotion scarcely allowed him utterance. “Alas, there is no hour like misfortune for showing us our true friends! The ingrates my hand has raised from the dust, would now in adversity return me the favour by grinding me in the mire. Those whom I have injured and slighted, seek the noble revenge of requiting me with affection! Croiser, this is indeed kind! I have injured you.”

“Never, sire.”

“I wronged you in thought.”

“It was no wrong, for my folly laid me open.”

“Well, well, I see I was in error; but let it be forgotten, my Croiser. It suffices that I know

you now ; such a knowledge is worth the purchase, dear as it has been ! ”

“ Think of it no more, sire. Let us mention it no longer. I alone was to blame. I have no wrongs to forget. I never had any to remember. Let us speak of yourself. Tell me of your own hopes and plans, and point out to me how I can serve you. My name, my interest, my personal exertions, my means, my fortune, everything that I have to command, is at your unlimited disposal. If private life holds forth a charm for you, and a paltry income of some ninety thousands can suffice for the wants of him who yesterday commanded as many millions, say but the word—say that you will only honour my humble roof, and we shall yet realize the anticipations of sharing our fortunes ; and if not in the possession of empire, yet enjoying what is far better, the happiness which wisdom sanctions.”

“ Croiser ! Croiser ! ” repeated Rannolini, in tones of bitter anguish, as he paced the cabin, while the convulsive movement of his right shoulder during this generous proposal, showed how much he was affected by it. “ *Why*,” he continued, without looking at the person he addressed, “ *why—why* did you ever leave me ?

I was angry—it is true! violent—it was wrong! suspicious—it was cruel to one who had so faithfully served me! But you knew—you knew, my Croiser, that I loved you—that you were one of those very few. Had *you* only remained by me, had I only possessed one friend like yourself, gentle enough to bend to my first fatal violence, but too honest to deceive, I should have known where to find an unbiassed counsellor—I should not have doubted all! I should not have been flattered into tyranny and folly, and misled into fatuity and crime. How, Croiser, *could* you leave me?”

Croiser attempted to reply, but the pang that agonised his breast compelled him to silence, and the tear that glistened in his dark eye revealed all that he suffered. Rannolini saw what was passing in his mind, and seizing his hand and affectionately pressing it to his bosom, he resumed, “But perhaps it is better as it is. You are a happier man! I have not deserved so true a friend as yourself. My waywardness might have wrung that generous bosom even yet more than it once did. I might have led you into the same vortex that engulfed myself. Yes, it is better that we did separate. Had you re-

mained faith"—then correcting himself, "Had you remained in league with me, and had you by obeying my orders, preserved my fleets from the fatal destruction of Trafalgar which you will remember I foretold to you, we should have conquered Britain; but that might have left you as wretched as I now am. You would have gained an empire, but have lost the wife of your heart. She who saved her country, brought you a possession worth more than all its territory. I, Croiser, you know I can speak on this point. Poor Josephine! Believe me I have had bitter experience! Mankind are not worth swaying. I now renounce the political world for ever. I shall henceforth feel no interest about any thing which may happen. In private life as you say I may be happy, more happy than I have been—No! If the crown of Europe—if the empire of the globe were now offered to me, I would not accept it. I will devote myself to science. I was right never to esteem mankind—But France—I am disgusted with ambition, and I wish to rule no longer—And the French people—What ingratitude! Where—How did I find them? Sunk in the lowest depths of vice and misery, the scorn of the world, the terror of themselves, rebels to their God—It was my

efforts, my unceasing industry, my direction alone, which dried up the torrents of French blood deluging their streets, which re-united them in one bond for the cause of their country, which gave to them a constitution protecting their persons and their properties, which reestablished God's altars in their churches, and restored to them the religion of their forefathers, and which finally not only gave back to France her station among the nations of the earth, but rendered her arms victorious and her name respected wherever her eagles could be planted, or the foot of Frenchman follow that standard which, for twenty years, has led him on to greatness and to glory! Yet all is in a moment to be forgotten at the first errors into which long uninterrupted success has betrayed me! No allowance is made for the weakness of humanity to which the greatest are as liable as the least. I am not only to be hurled from the throne which my victories alone have established, but my children and my family are to be declared aliens. A family of abhorred imbeciles is to be thrust upon my seat by foreign bayonets, and Frenchmen are to heap every unjust obloquy and objurgation on him who first saved them from mutual slaughter, and then protected

their country from the destruction which incensed Europe was about to effect.—France! France! I have mourned over your wrongs, and asserting your rights have bled in your cause, but never till now did I think to blush for your degradation and shame. But this is over now, Croiser, my mind is resolved—my greatness, though undisputed, is past. I would not recall it, yet I have rarely been happy, and my happiness is yet to come. But hark! I hear them approaching to interrupt our interview. Their prescribed minutes have expired. My jailors are fearful lest even my breath should thaw their bonds. I little expected to revisit this bay under such circumstances!—I hope that you have not breathed a syllable respecting my tour to London?”

“No.”

“That is right. I gave my promise that it should not be divulged.—Nor shall it—at least during my life—when no more, the secret is safe. The world would never believe that I could have been guilty of such temerity. We must separate for the present, but do you return on board within two hours, and I will in the meanwhile draw up instructions as to what I wish you to do. I accept the generous offer which you

have made to me of your influence. You shall go and treat for me with your government. Remember I abjure politics once and for ever. I will intrust all to you. I will implicitly fulfil every condition for which you shall stipulate. But you shall have your instructions two hours hence. They will not allow you to remain on board, you must return to me. I am not now rich enough, my Croiser, to reward these last services as I could wish, but still let a token of remembrance—inconsiderable though it be—assure you that I shall ever look upon your faithful attachment as one of the greatest consolations that is left to me.” Rannolini then took a diamond ring from a little cabinet near him, and advancing to Croiser, said “Give me your hand,” placing it on his finger, “and now embrace me,” at this they rushed into one another’s arms and parted with tears in their eyes.

An aide-de-camp now came in to say, that Croiser’s presence was required on deck. Too deeply affected to do more than wave his hand, and utter some indistinct sounds relative to his return in two hours, he left the cabin and was bowed over the side by the captain.

Thus parted for the last time Croiser and Ran-

nolini, nor need I now inform the reader that the latter was but an assumed name of NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE!

They never met again, for on Croiser's repairing to his appointment, he was peremptorily refused a second interview, on the ground that the order from the Secretary of State which procured him the first, did not authorize any further communication. Enraged and maddened he returned to the shore to take steps for rectifying this mistake, but before he could succeed in his endeavours, he had the grief of seeing the Bellerophon set sail with the master spirit whom he had long adored, and whose destination he was now unable to conjecture. Alas, with all his fears he never dreamed that the rulers of the land were thus consigning to the most slow and murderous torture of a fatal climate, the hero whom they had not the ability to subdue, nor the courage to destroy.

The foe prostrated by his fate, their magnanimity led them to insult; and the confiding enemy who threw himself upon the generosity of the nation, they betrayed with the most perfidious treachery, and aggravated with the most deliberate contumely and oppression. Croiser, however, never ceased to take the liveliest interest in his fortunes, and

on learning his cruel sentence, he applied to be appointed Governor of the rock on which he languished through his dreadful captivity. This, however, the ministry refused; and bent on adding to their victim's torture by the vilest means, they sent out one, whose name will continue to be abhorred among mankind, as long as their admiration is capable of being excited by that which is great, or their detestation and scorn by that which is Low.

THE END.







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